

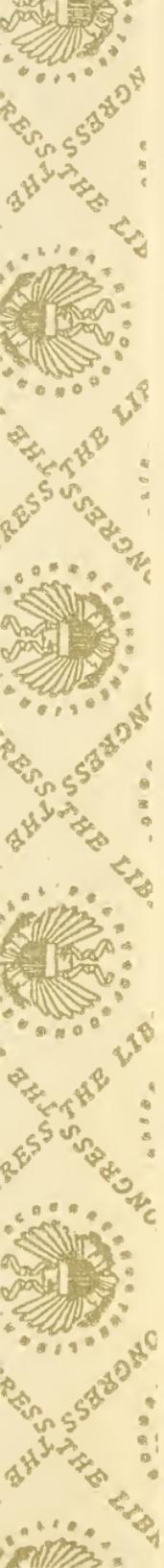
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0000564172A









The Author.

ADVENTURES

OF THE

A. E. F. SOLDIER



RILEY STRICKLAND

I590
9
S79

Copyright, 1920
RILEY STRICKLAND

© CLA 565394

MAR 27 1920

no 1

PREFACE.

Through the medium of this book it is my desire to give the reader a fair conception of the many experiences and difficulties encountered by the average soldier of the American Expeditionary Forces and the hardships which he endured from the time he first entered the training camp until he returned from overseas and received his discharge.

In a general way, I have described the many and various locations and movements of the Ninetieth Division from its organization to its dissolution. In the training camp, in England, in France and in Germany we met with various complex problems, strange people and strange customs, in addition to the thrills and horrors of the Western front. More specifically, I have dealt with my own regiment.

I seek no publicity or medals of honor, but I am writing of what I experienced as one of two and one-half million. Although the first person is used quite frequently, it is solely for the purpose of establishing the authenticity of the volume. In compiling this data I have consulted

PREFACE

no military records, but have written simply from personal observation and experience.

I earnestly hope that this book will furnish the reader pleasure in following the A. E. F. soldier through the World War.

Sincerely,

RILEY STRICKLAND.

CONTENTS

Chapter.		Page.
I.	OUR FIRST SOLDIER DAYS.....	11
II.	LEAVING THE STATES.....	25
III.	CROSSING THE ATLANTIC.....	35
IV.	A SHORT STAY IN ENGLAND.....	46
V.	SUNNY FRANCE.....	52
VI.	BURE LES TEMPLIERS.....	65
VII.	TRAINING FOR ACTION.....	79
VIII.	OFF TO THE FRONT.....	86
IX.	A QUIET SECTOR.....	95
X.	ST. MIHIEL.....	107
XI.	RELIEF	147
XII.	MEUSE-ARGONNE	161
XIII.	PEACE	191
XIV.	HIKING INTO GERMANY.....	209
XV.	DIE MOSEL UND DER RHEIN.....	227
XVI.	THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION.....	255
XVII.	WATCHFUL WAITING.....	267
XVIII.	VACATION DAYS.....	281
XIX.	OUR LAST DAYS IN RHINELAND.....	299
XX.	HOMEWARD BOUND.....	311
XXI.	CONCLUSION	329

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
The Author.....	Frontispiece
American Convoy to France.....	40
Bure les Templiers (Showing Church Built in the Middle Ages).....	66
Bure les Templiers.....	70
At the Cross-Roads in the Quiet Sector.....	94
Trenches in the Quiet Sector.....	96
German Dugout near Pont-a-Mousson.....	98
Statue of Jeanne d'Arc, Pont-a-Mousson.....	100
German Machine Gun Emplacements Shelled by Our Planes	102
Railroad Cables Leading to Artillery Positions.....	104
Ninetieth Division Headquarters—St. Mihiel Front.	108
What Our Doughboys Went Through at St. Mihiel..	110
Map Showing Part of St. Mihiel Salient.....	112
Ninetieth Division Front Lines and Sector Limits..	114
American First Aid Station, Fay-en-Haye.....	116
Death Valley, Vilcey, France.....	118
Vilcey, France, Showing Destruction.....	120
German Machine Gun Emplacements.....	122
Shell-torn Cemetery, Pout-a-Mousson.....	124
315th Engineers' Cemetery.....	126
Fatal Spot for E Company, 315th Engineers.....	128
P. C. 2nd Bn. 315 Engineers (Between Fay-en- Haye and Montauville).....	130
Forest Destroyed by Shell Fire.....	134
Interior of Cathedral, Toul, France.....	148

By Going A. W. O. L. We Found Some Good Eats in Toul	152
Direct Hit by An 8-inch Shell, Meuse-Argonne....	156
Map to Illustrate Meuse-Argonne Offensive.....	162
Ninetieth Division Front Lines and Sector Limits on the Meuse.....	164
Bridge Repaired by 315th Engineers.....	166
Silvery France, Verdun Front.....	168
German Planes Brought Down by Our Aviator.....	172
Map Showing Part of Meuse-Argonne Offensive....	178
Scene at Dun-sur-Meuse.....	180
Buildings Wrecked by German Shells.....	182
Wagon Bridge Across the Meuse.....	186
Swing Bridge Across the Meuse.....	188
French Civilians Returning Home.....	202
Crown Prince's Home, Stenay, France.....	204
Lieser an der Mosel (Headquarters 315th Engineers) 224	
Berncastel-Cues, Germany (Ninetieth Division Head- quarters)	232
Filzen an der Mosel, Showing Houses Three Cen- turies Old.....	236
Depot at Lieser, Showing Vineyards in the Back- ground	246
Cues, Germany, Where Some of Our Boys Were Laid to Rest.....	276
Ninetieth Division Passing in Review for General Pershing	301
Ruins of Verdun.....	310
Hun Prisoners Working for France.....	312
Homeward Bound.....	320

ADVENTURES OF THE A. E. F. SOLDIER

CHAPTER I.

OUR FIRST SOLDIER DAYS.

War had been declared on Germany. The Selective Service Act had been passed and the tremendous problem of mobilizing an army sufficient to effect a speedy conclusion of the world struggle was being solved.

Camp Travis was being built. The skeleton of the Ninetieth Division was being made up of various detachments from the different camps throughout the United States. In September the draftees began to arrive in camp, followed by more in October. The War Department suspended the sending of any more during the winter months, but in February and March, 1918, and each month thereafter, trainloads of Texas and Oklahoma boys arrived in camp to begin their career in the military world.

It was on April 26, 1918, that the writer, with thirteen others, left the station of one of the best towns in East Texas, bidding good-bye to the

throng of good people who had assembled there to honor our departure. All were cheerful, and we who were leaving had the sentiment of "Send Me Away With a Smile." Our train was late and we did not leave until about 9 p. m. For our first few miles our trip seemed perfectly normal, but we took on more soldiers at every county seat and junction. Sometimes we would connect on an entire car full of civilian-clad soldiers. When we first left we had a good chair-car, but pretty soon we had to give it up for a smoker. By midnight the train ceased to be a commercial train and was used exclusively for soldiers.

At the break of day the next morning complaints of hunger came from every corner; however, we were soon served our first army meal, which was very good and made us feel very refreshed, sending our morale skyward. On and on we rolled, taking on more coaches filled to their capacity with soldiers at every junction until at last our train contained some eighteen or twenty coaches. Near Austin we were met by a reception committee, which was a squadron of aeroplanes that escorted us to San Antonio. Some of us wondered if they had brought us

any dinner, because we were all beginning to get hungry. As we finally pulled into the switch yards in San Antonio all of us were exceedingly vigilant in hopes of locating a sandwich vendor, but none was seen. We got switched out to Camp Travis about 4 p. m. It was raining and the mud was sticky. No dinner had been had yet, and it was then that the natural characteristic of the soldier—that is, complaint—began to germinate.

We were then marched into a reception room wondering all the time if it was a dining room. It proved to be a long floorless barn, dubbed the "Bull Pen," filled with the most inquisitive characters one ever saw. Before we had a chance at another meal we had to stop there and answer all those fool questions. We had to give our pedigree in full from Alpha to Omega, tell whether or not we sprang from a monkey, and if so, just how far we had really sprung. Also, we had to give in detail how much readin', 'ritin' and 'rithmetic we had had, how many lickin's we ever got in school and how many times we had climbed on top of the schoolhouse and placed boards on the chimney to smoke the teacher out, et cetera.

After our initiation at the Bull Pen we were then herded together like so many cattle and taken to our new home, which was a very hard trip through the heavy mud and rain and with no dinner in sight. Our particular bunch had to go just as far as possible in the last barracks of the depot brigade. When we got there our guide told us that these barracks were our new home, then we thought surely that the next thing would be a good hot dinner. In this we were sadly disappointed. We had to go through another ordeal of answering questions, telling all about our family tree and the various and sundry branches thereof, with our first name last and the last name first, etc., and vice versa, all so audibly and distinctly that there could be no probabilities of misunderstanding. All of this was done with our minds on something to eat.

Next came our housekeeping outfit, which was considerably abbreviated. If they put out any silk and linen bed-clothes, yours truly got cheated, because all I got was a ducking bed-tick, some aluminum eating plates and cups, barracks bag and towels. I was soon steered to a huge straw stack with my bed-tick, and thus a good bed was made.

In a few more minutes we were marched into a long dining room, which would hold about two hundred and fifty men, and after the mess sergeant had commanded us to sit down we got away with a vast quantity of beans, bacon, bread and coffee. No ten course dinner ever tasted better than this second army meal.

Our first two or three days in camp were passed off rather pleasantly, because it rained so hard we couldn't drill; however, we had from one to twenty-seven roll calls each day and as many examinations and inspections.

Some very interesting things happened at the physical examinations, especially to those who really desired to be unfit for military service. In one particular instance the doctor was testing the ears. The victim was some few feet from him and pretended that he could not hear him whispering as the others had. The doctor's suspicions were aroused, and, lowering his voice, he whispered, "Can't you hear that?" The patient replied, "No, Sir." He was immediately pronounced physically fit for military service and marched back to his barracks and perhaps given a few days of K. P. If the reader has not been a soldier he may think that it means Knights of

Pythias, but far be it from that; in the army it means Kitchen Police.

Quite a lot of fun was had around our barracks. We were fortunate enough to have with us one of the most comical fellows in the National Army. He kept the entire bunch in a continual uproar of laughter all the time. On one occasion he requested the captain for permission to guard a measles barracks, which was granted, and while walking his post he was "hard-boiled" with all passersby, making several of them pick up matches, cigarette butts, etc., off the ground.

In a few days the ground dried off and drilling began. Those who aspired to be a corporal would get a squad off from the others and give commands until they were hoarse. The lieutenants specially emphasized the importance of physical exercise, and we were given one hour of that each day. Some of us who could scarcely bend when we first arrived in camp soon became real active fellows.

There is some contrast between an army camp and home. Usually when told to do anything at home the command is often met with "Wait a minute," "As soon as I finish this," etc.; while in the training camp when the sergeant's whistle

blows it is best not to argue the question about it. Many letters to mother, dad, sister, sweetheart and friend have been abruptly suspended, as well as domino games, dice games, etc., when we had to fall out to police the premises.

Our first few reveille formations were worth seeing. Ofttimes some fellow would come down with one shoe in his hand or carrying his coat on his arm. Over half the shoes down the line were unlaced or unbuttoned. One morning one fellow was late, and the lieutenant, being highly displeased, gruffly asked him what was the matter. The man tediously explained that he had misplaced his trousers and had thus been delayed. The officer told him to let the trousers go the next time and come on to reveille on time regardless of anything else. After that the poor fellow slept with his trousers on all the time, and they were not pulled off until he discarded them for khakis about two weeks afterward.

A thing not to be forgotten was the ordeal of inoculations for smallpox and typhoid. The former only required one shot, but the latter required three at intervals of one week each. Here is where the gloomy side of army life began. Some of the boys got so sick that they would often fall

out of ranks while drilling or standing in formation. One poor fellow skinned his face horribly by falling while standing at attention.

I remember quite well how the smallpox vaccination and the second typhoid shot affected me. I was so sick that I could do nothing but roll on my bunk, and as both of my arms were sore I could not even do that. I was not working at the company where I bunked, but was on special duty about a half mile away. I played hooky several days. I told the sergeant that I was so sick that I couldn't walk to the infirmary, but he said that I would have to if I wanted any medicine. So, about 1 p. m., I walked up to the infirmary to find a line of about one hundred and fifty rookies ahead of me. The sun was broiling hot and we had to wait outside until they could get to us. About 3 p. m. it came my turn. The doctor gave me a big dose of salts and sent me back to my bunk. That afternoon I would have traded my position in the army for thirty cents and probably could have been jewed down a bit from that price.

Besides making one temporarily sick, those vaccinations would sometimes make a permanent sore on the arm of such degree as to disqualify one for

overseas service. Later, however, when we were enduring the hardships of the trenches we learned to appreciate the benefits derived from those inoculations. There were very few cases of typhoid and smallpox in the American Army. We should, indeed, feel grateful to the revelations of medical science.

We were soon fitted up in uniforms, and it was not long before we began to look like real soldiers. Our civilian clothing was cast aside, some being donated to the Belgian Relief Committee and the remainder sent home. This was really a serious period in our lives, because many civilian suits were sent home never to be donned again, the owner later dying on the field of battle in France and being laid to rest in a soldier's grave. The Y. M. C. A.'s were filled to their capacity the next few days with parcels post and express packages which carried the surplus clothing back to their old homes for a few months' or years' rest.

Fitting six thousand new men out and out was no small task, and in most instances the real fitting became a personal problem for each individual to solve. We were told to trade among ourselves where a mutual exchange would result in a fit to either or both, so if John Doe had a No.

6 coat which would fit Richard Roe, and vice versa, an exchange was in order so that both would be accommodated. The supply sergeants, anxious to get the job over with, would usually tell us that he had nothing left to fit us and that we must take chances on a trade, or that the camp laundry charged by the month and that a No. 10 coat would shrink to a No. 6 after being laundered. This practice was the same during our entire career except in the boundaries of No Man's Land, in France, where the advantages of the camp laundry were not amplified.

Now that we were all dressed up in army uniforms, we needed discipline. Good conduct is the running mate of good dress. Many laughable things happened in the period that we were in the training camps.

One morning after a lieutenant had lectured for an hour or more on military courtesy and discipline, with special emphasis on the rule that a soldier must stand rigidly at attention while conversing with an officer, he concluded by saying that he appreciated the fact that we were all new, and if any of us desired to ask any questions he would be very glad to give us what information he could. One fellow near the steps where the

officer was standing leaned over with one hand on his hip and with one foot on the lower step and asked, "Well, could you tell me how I could manage to get out of this foot brigade?" The lieutenant stated that the infantry was the best branch in the service, but that if he really wanted a transfer he must first learn to stand at attention.

One night one of our bunch had orders to report to the orderly room after supper to do some clerical work. We had had our second shot the night before, and upon the rooky's arrival the lieutenant asked him how he felt, whereupon he responded, "Well, feller, I feel pretty tough." The lieutenant bawled him out for his intimacy and told him that he was excused for the night.

One of the funniest things that was told to have happened in Camp Travis was a joke that one of the soldiers pulled on a captain. The soldier reported to the orderly room for duty, and instead of saying, "Sir, Private _____ reports for duty," he merely asked, "What did you want with me?" The captain criticised his lacking in military courtesy, and told him to sit down at the desk and the captain would demonstrate the proper way to report for duty, and that the private could play the part of the officer and assign

him to duty. After the necessary preliminaries of knocking at the door, entering and saluting, the captain said, "Sir, Private so and so reports for duty." The private looked up from the desk and said, "Ah, get to h—— out of here; I don't need you for anything."

Some very clever efforts were made by those so determined to get into a branch of the service which they most desired. The sergeants were wise to the various schemes of the new men. One day the sergeants called for all who could drive a Ford, and many with ambitions to be army chauffeurs promptly stepped forward. The sergeant replied that they might do well around kitchen machinery, and they were placed on K. P. In like manner, several would-be carpenters were told that they would probably make good wood-cutters.

We were soon out of quarantine, but before we had time to appreciate our liberty we were being transferred to the various branches of the division. The crowds who had been together in the initial army days and who had enjoyed many hearty laughs together over the many peculiar and funny things that had happened in the making of a soldier were scattered to the proverbial four winds of the earth.

Uncle Sam's great process of transforming a population who had theretofore known nothing but peace into one that must learn military ways in order to defend Liberty was progressing rapidly. The Huns were threatening Paris and we could not lose any time. The Ninetieth Division was being filled to combat strength preparatory to going overseas, and the Depot Brigade was soon culled to a mere skeleton. Several trainloads of new recruits from Camp Dodge, Iowa, were brought to the great army camp in Southwest Texas.

Our infantry, which later proved to be of the "none-better" quality, was on the job with its training schedule. All the new men were given rifles, bayonets and other necessary equipment and sent to the target range at Camp Boullis, and the Bull's Eye was the chief objective for several days. We were actually going into fight, and our doughboys must be able to drive Fritz into consternation when the time would come for them to go "Over the Top." The bayonet drill was not neglected, and many Fritz dummies were subjected to furious attacks by our infantrymen.

Although we were working hard now, we were glad to be out of quarantine and have a chance

to go to San Antonio occasionally. Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons and nights were the times most passes to town were issued. It was a great treat to eat at the swell cafes after having had army chow for several days; however, all the places observed the rules of Hooverization to the nth degree. In one place there was a sign "Ask for one lump of sugar only. Stir like hell, we don't mind the noise."

Trips to Brackenridge Park, Hot Wells and the old missions afforded very wholesome recreation. The shows in town were greatly enjoyed, while the Gunter and the St. Anthony Hotels afforded a splendid rendezvous for meeting out-of-town friends.

At Rendezvous Park, just outside of Camp Travis, dances were held almost every night, the participants being the soldiers, the Red Cross and Y. M. C. A. girls, and the girls employed at the camp laundry. They were properly chaperoned and all had many pleasant hours.

We had been hearing various rumors for quite a while about going to France, and when some of the boys who had been promised furloughs began to be refused we began to think seriously about the matter.

CHAPTER II.

LEAVING THE STATES.

The Ninetieth Division was nearing completion. Other small contingents of draftees had come into the Depot Brigade and some were promptly transferred to the Division.

The gossip began to spread, "We're going to France." There was no doubt of our going but of course no one knew definitely just when we would leave.

All outward signs revealed our expectations. Details were at work making boxes, crates, etc. Wagons, carts and harness were being painted and oiled and taken apart and crated for shipment. All men were being issued overseas equipment, and every man was required to write his name on every article in his possession. All necessary equipment that was not needed before our expected departure was packed up and designated "American Expeditionary Force."

Infirmaries were on the job conducting the overseas physical examination and, also, completing every man's typhoid and smallpox in-

oculations. Our regimental surgeon impressed the fact upon the men that the inoculation must be on paper as well as in the arm, and warned each man to see personally that the required number of "shots" was inserted in his service record.

Other domestic and social signs proved that we were not expected to remain in Camp Travis much longer. Men who had wives temporarily living in San Antonio began to make arrangements for them to go back "home." Fathers and mothers flocked to San Antonio to bid good-bye to their sons. Sweethearts and sisters came to tell the boys good-bye, and in some instances weddings were solemnized, and the bride would bid hubby "God speed." All the boys were allowed passes as far as consistently could be arranged. The company commanders themselves did not know just when we would leave, but they would grant passes quite liberally until the final quarantine went into effect.

It was about that time that "censorship" began. We were forbidden to write or wire that we were going so soon. This seemed rather severe, because many relatives and

friends failed to see some loved one and bid him a fond farewell, because they could not find out when to come or when the troop train would pass through the home-town. However, we all realized that it was necessary that we keep our intention hidden from German spies, so we took it all good-naturedly.

Thus the last few days in Camp Travis were spent in good-byes, tears and suspense until Wednesday, June 5, 1918, one year from the first registration day, the first trainload of Camp Travis started for France, and the writer was on that train.

Our regiment was divided into three sections. The first one left the station about 10 a. m. As we rolled out northeastward over Texas we wondered when we would see the dear old Lone Star State again. Our second section caught up with us at Palestine and brought the report that one of their men had gone "over the hill" a few hours previous. His home was in that locality, and, presumptively, he was homesick. Perhaps he was later disturbed, as details of M. P.'s were promptly sent back in search of him.

About 2 a. m. we passed through the good old

town of Longview, which I had called my home for some four years. I had expected everybody to be slumbering peacefully, but the news had leaked out that we were likely to come through at any time, and the town was too patriotic to allow any of the boys to go through without another good-bye, so there was a great crowd at the station. One of my friends asked me where we were going. I told him that I didn't know, and that I was not supposed to tell if I did, but we had been going directly toward France ever since we left San Antonio and we were still headed in that direction.

We arrived in Texarkana Thursday at 7 a. m., and thence pulled out through the swamps, pines, sweet gums and razor backs of dear old Arkansas. We reached Little Rock about 2 p. m., where we got off for a few minutes and indulged in a little calesthenics. We then proceeded on our journey through the northern part of the State, arriving in Poplar Bluff, Mo., about 8 p. m., where we got off and sang to the citizens that we were "going over and would not come back till it was over over there," etc., and we told K-K-K-Katie that we'd be waiting at the k-k-k-kitchen door. As we continued

our journey through the "show me" State many quartettes were appropriately singing the Missouri Waltz.

The next morning we awoke to find ourselves running along the side of the Great Father of Waters. We arrived in St. Louis about 8 a. m., and after a short stay we crossed the bridge to East St. Louis and started across the beautiful State of Illinois. At Mattoon, Illinois, we got off and marched through the city. It was a prosperous railroad town in a pretty prairie country, and the beauty of each was supplemented by a green lawn. In the latter respect, as well as in size, the town seemed like a twin of Beaumont, Texas. Later in the afternoon we passed through Terre Haute, Indiana, and arrived in Indianapolis about sunset. In the night we passed into Ohio and arrived in Cleveland the next morning.

All day Saturday we ran along Lake Erie enjoying the cool breeze. Between Erie, Pa., and Buffalo, we saw many grape vineyards, where an immense quantity of Bryan's favorite beverage is made each year. We arrived in Rochester about night, and after a short rest and some singing we were treated with ice

cream, candies and cigarettes by the Red Cross. After leaving Rochester we soon reached the beautiful Catskill Mountains and the Hudson, which made a splendid combination of scenery. It was "moonlight on the Hudson," and as the cool mountain air found its way through our open windows we regretted that we had to sleep some. We arrived in New York the next morning about 10 a. m., just four days and nights from the time we left Camp Travis.

Not all of the Division moved over the same route as we did. Instead of having stories of the pretty prairie farms of Illinois and Indiana, the cold breeze of Lake Erie, the grape-juice section of Pennsylvania and New York, the scenery of the Hudson, etc., boys of other units told of the many wheat fields of Kansas, the Blue Grass of Kentucky and the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.

One regiment was detained in Camp Travis for several days because of the discovery of a spy. A soldier had learned the exact scheduled date of the departure and the definite route over which his unit would move. He attempted to send a cablegram to Germany disclosing all

the information, but he was caught by the authorities, segregated from his organization and deprived of his trip to Germany with the other boys. The moving date of the entire regiment was deferred several days.

We enjoyed our trip from San Antonio to New York. We had splendid accommodations all the way. The train was composed exclusively of Pullman cars, with the exception of a car for baggage and a box car for the kitchen, which was on the job all the time. There were two seats to every three men, thus giving the upper berth to one man only, while the other two occupied the lower. Our meals were carried to our coaches where we were served in our mess kits. All this was some contrast to what we later encountered in traveling through France. The Red Cross was our friend at all the large cities where we stopped. The people all along the route would shout with joy as we passed by, and as we glided over the beautiful farms and saw Old Glory waving there, as well as at the homes of the cities, we realized more than ever before that we had the best country in the world and that we must hurry on across the Atlantic and keep the fight

over there, so that the pillaging Hun could not get a chance to plunder and destroy our beautiful land of the free and home of the brave.

After having crossed the ferry into New York City proper, we entrained again and went to Camp Mills, Long Island. Our stay there was rather brief. Our time was spent in completing our equipment and more overseas examinations.

Although we had seen quite a few aerial stunts in San Antonio, we kept our heads in the air a great deal at Camp Mills, because the planes were as thick as blackbirds. Those flyers were chiefly the ones who had already qualified for overseas service and were more proficient than the amateurs in the Southern camps. They could make any spin, dive or loop that the human mind can possibly conceive of.

We had plenty of rain while on Long Island which gave us an idea of what life in the muddy trenches was going to be like. We did not have our good barracks like those in Camp Travis, as Camp Mills was only a concentration camp and not used at all for training purposes. There we lived in floorless tents. We

waked up one morning to find ourselves floating in water. Some wondered if the Atlantic Ocean was out of banks. We went to work with picks and shovels ditching the water out of the tents and digging large square holes for receptacles for the surplus. Occasionally some soldier wading through the mud would suddenly plunge off into one of those holes and get a muddy bath, while the bystanders laughed.

Very few of our regiment went down to the city while we were there, although some got passes to Mineola and Jamaica. Many of the boys of the other units, however, went to "town" and learned a great deal of the whims and wherewores of the world's greatest city.

We soon began to realize that we were about to tell the dear old United States good-bye, but we were all ready to go and get the job over with. We reasoned that the sooner we got over the sooner we would get back. We could not tell how long we would stay in Camp Mills. Army gossip now began to spread. Some said that we were going to Hoboken; others said that we were going through Canada or down the St. Lawrence. Others said that we were not going anywhere for a few

weeks, but about Wednesday night as we loaded our freight and baggage on the little train we thought we knew where we were going.

On Thursday, June 13th, we put on our packs, hiked through the mud to the train and were soon on another ferryboat in the harbor going across to Brooklyn Harbor. We waited there in the wharves and were served coffee and sandwiches by the Red Cross. About 6 p. m. we steamed away. The old Statue of Liberty in the distance seemed to be weeping in admiration as if she realized that it was for her preservation that we were going to Europe, and perhaps many of the boys' eyes were a bit moist as they looked at the Goddess and realized that it would be a long time before they could see the U. S. A. again, if ever. So, with a feeling of sorrow, blended with the satisfaction of doing one's duty, the troops on the S. S. Huntsend were soon towed out of sight of the great city and, for us, it was "Good-bye Broadway, Hello France."

CHAPTER III.

CROSSING THE ATLANTIC.

Anyone who has not been on a crowded transport such as the Sammies had to ride when the Allied side looked so gloomy can hardly realize what it is. Paris was threatened every minute since the break through the lines at St. Quentin, March 21st, and Uncle Sam had to get us across; consequently, the ships were packed to their limited capacity and then some.

When we first pulled out from the harbor no one could go upon deck until we got out of sight of land. No smoking was allowed after dark, and no one with rank lower than captain could carry a flash light. Every precaution was taken to avoid detection. There was not much complaint about those restrictions, because the subs were simply playing havoc, even on our Atlantic Coast, and it was not hard to realize the danger that we were in.

A further precaution was practiced for protection against submarines. We had boat drill about twice each day. The signal was one long and four short blasts of the siren. No

matter where you were or what you were doing you must stop and assemble at a certain place on deck, each company, platoon, squad and man had a certain designated area on the ship to go to when the signal was sounded, as well as a certain route to take to get there. Even had there been an explosion there would not have been very many lives lost, because we would have had ample time to get into the life boats; everything was carried out so systematically, like everything else in our great army—no stampedes, no rioting—everyone patient and waiting for his turn to come.

Strict obedience to the siren's warning was noticeable. The actual signal would have been the same, and we were not positive that a torpedo had not hit us when the whistle sounded. It was a common thing to see some soldier with lather on one side of his face and the other side unshaven at the boat drill. In connection with the boat drill, there was usually an inspection of personal appearance.

The officers had good staterooms, and many of the sergeants had good saloons, but the men occupied the regular troop deck and were crowded horribly. Eighteen men occupied a

space about 500 cubic feet, both for eating and sleeping. There were long benches on each side of a long table which served for our dining table, library table, etc., and our bedroom suites consisted of a hammock swung from the ceiling above. We had some good beds down at our infirmary, however, and I was fortunate enough to cop one of them. All who could slept on the deck every night. We had three blankets and a shelter half each, and it being June we were able to keep quite comfortable until we got up around Halifax; then it began to be rather cold at nights. Down in those troop decks, or holes, there was not room to cuss the proverbial cat. All of our equipment had to be crammed in under the table or above the joists overhead.

The Huntsend was operated by the English, and we could not appreciate their cooking any too well. Just imagine an immense vat, the size that the Texans and Missourians would use for dipping longhorn cattle and mules, filled with beans, prunes, soup, coffee and tea, and you have some conception of what enormous quantities had to be cooked. We got rather tired of stewed liver, salty herring and "tay";

however, we had good jam, oleomargarine and bread. One of our majors who was in charge of the ship explained to the cooks that many of us were from the South and preferred our food fried or boiled instead of raw or stewed, after which there was some improvement. The chow was carried in large pans from the kitchen upon deck to our "dining rooms," where it was served. It was nothing uncommon to see a K. P. apparently trying to loop the loop while going down the slick steps, spilling soup, coffee, tea, or what not on whoever happened to be in the danger zone, which oftentimes included the hatchway below. Most of the boys had six meals each day—three down and three up. It was a pitiful sight to see a bunch of boys lined up along the rail trying so hard to make the correct pronunciation of the famous river on the Western Front—Ourcq.

The Huntsend had some three thousand men and officers on board, which consisted of Companies C, D, E, F, Train and Medical of the 315th Engineers, and a part of the 89th Division Artillery. The usual rivalry between organizations was prevalent to the extent that the climax was a few hand-to-hand difficulties.

It did not take long to get order restored, however, and the boys heeded the warning that they must conserve their energy to fight the Germans with rather than waste it fighting among themselves.

A and B Companies of our Regiment had left New York ahead of us on a much larger ship, the Olympia, with the 360th Infantry. They did not go via Liverpool, but went directly to Southampton, resting there about one day and proceeding on to France, arriving there before we landed in Liverpool. Some of the other Regiments were seeing London the day we reached our destination in France, July 4th, and the rear was leaving New York City.

On Sunday, June 16th, we steamed into Halifax harbor. We could plainly see the desolate section of the city which had been eliminated from the commercial world by the awful explosion of December 6, 1917. We anchored about 10:30 a. m., but none were allowed to debark. We had both Protestant and Catholic Church services, and all felt thankful that we had traveled for more than two days among the submarines and had escaped disaster. In

A C 20

ANNA ANDERSON KROPP

ANNA

the afternoon we enjoyed a splendid concert by the Artillery's band.

Although it was June, it was cold in Halifax. As we stood around and shivered with our overcoats on, we certainly did not envy the eskimo because of his cool place of abode; however, we could have used a bit of his warm clothing. We wondered if the new recruits on the drill grounds at Camp Travis were not enduring a far more unpleasant and different climate for their first School of the Company, etc.

We remained in Halifax about twenty-seven hours, waiting for our convoy, leaving about 1 p. m. Monday, June 17th, after having unloaded a few pneumonia patients. When we got out of sight of land again we realized that we were doomed to a long and divergent voyage in order to dodge the U-boats, and it was eleven days before we saw land again.

On our long voyage everything moved along as smoothly as could be expected. We had a canteen with us which supplied us with plenty of candies, cigars, cigarettes, etc. We also had a Y. M. C. A. library with plenty of good books and games. Many of the boys had string in-

struments with them, and quite a lot of rag music was indulged in. Several good singers composed parodies on popular songs which portrayed the various sides and angles of army life. Our chaplain would occasionally conduct singings in which we told the waves of the Atlantic that we would soon occupy the castles on the River Rhine, and that we'd sing Yankee Doodle Unter den Linden, etc. All of those pleasant pastimes were very beneficial in keeping the morale of the troops in an A-1 condition. There was some studying on board, and a few classes were conducted the same as if in camp. As a whole, our time on the ship was well spent.

Almost daily we would receive wireless messages of the fighting on the front. Just then our marines were fighting in Belleau Wood with a gallantry that had never been exceeded, and very encouraging reports came to us of their daily progress. During the first days of our journey we received the news that the jungle was completely in their hands and that numerous prisoners had been taken. In fact, the tide of the great war was turning as we were crossing the Atlantic.

In our association with the Tommies who composed the ship's crew we heard some interesting stories. We would spend quite a lot of our time conversing with them and boring them with questions. The Englishmen commented considerably about our cheerfulness in spite of the U-boats. They said that we acted as if we thought we were going on a picnic. Their tales about the German Army varied considerably. Some would say that the German soldiers were all old men and young boys, while others said that there were many middle-aged men yet in the Hun Army. We made constant inquiries of the various aspects of the war, the chief question being "How long do you think the war will last?" One of our boys, anxious to get some consolation, asked that question, and the answer was, "The first seven years is usually the worst." That fellow did not bother the Englishmen any more.

On and on we rocked across the waves which were sometimes more or less careless and would splash all over the mid-deck. Down at the infirmary we had a few patients, and we had orders to not open the portholes of their rooms. They had been in bed some three or

four days, and the ship surgeon said that they must not get out. One day the man on duty with the patients left the portholes open, and while standing out on deck he saw an angry wave coming. He made a dash for the sick-room, but too late. When he got down there he found everything floating in water. The patients got out of bed without a bit of trouble. All their clothing and the bed-clothes were saturated with water. The man on duty the day before had given one of the patients twice the required amount of salts, and the latter was not sick very much longer.

Our convoy consisted of nine other transports, one freighter and two submarine destroyers. One morning everything was quiet and peaceful and we were falling out for boat drill. We saw and heard a shot fired from one of the destroyers, presumptively at a submarine. We did not learn whether any damages were done either by or to the supposed U-boat, but our ship made the entire voyage unharmed.

About four days before we reached Liverpool our Major in charge of the ship was not satisfied with the promised improvement in the chow, so he placed our own mess sergeants in

charge of the cooking. After that our eats were more satisfactory, and the new sergeants apparently exercised their authority, as one of the Englishmen came down to the infirmary about daylight one morning with a broken nose, and upon pointed inquiry it was revealed that an American mess-sergeant had done it.

About three days before we reached Liverpool a British convoy of U-boat destroyers met us and escorted us safely back to England. On June 27th we saw land, the coast of Ireland, and the convoy split up, some going to Queensborough, Ireland, and others to various English ports. On the 28th our ship steamed into Liverpool harbor and the message was immediately cabled back that we had arrived safely overseas.

CHAPTER IV.

A SHORT STAY IN ENGLAND.

Immediately after our arrival in Liverpool harbor we marched through the main part of the city to the depot to take the train. There was no unusual demonstration. Liverpool had seen lots of the Sammies before and we created no extraordinary excitement. There was the ordinary hustle of the busy city, with the usual number of pedestrians who greeted us with smiles, the waving of hats and the display of Union Jacks and Old Glory. Liverpool has more houses of uniform size and design than any other city in the world. All the dwellings are two stories or more and have walls of gray stone and roofs of red tile.

We lost our artillery brethren at Liverpool, as they took a different route from us. We were soon on our way toward Southampton. New sights began to attract us. Tunnel after tunnel we passed through which was more or less annoying, as we were all absorbed in seeing the beautiful country. The magnificent farm houses which we had seen as Ned's home

in our First and Second Readers we now beheld with our natural eyes. It being early summer, the grain-planted hills were green and very picturesque.

England is very thickly populated, and there seemed to be a farm house to every five or six acres of land. Unlike France and Germany, the English farmers usually live on their respective tracts instead of huddling together in small villages.

The trains in England are much smaller than our trains. The small coaches are divided into compartments. Each compartment will hold about eight men. The seats extend the entire width of the car, perpendicular to the length. Doors are on each side of each compartment. The accommodations are scarcely ahead of our street cars.

Our toy train made very good time. After about a three hours' run out of Liverpool we reached Derby, where we were served an abundance of coffee. We did not tarry long, and we were soon gliding on across the pretty country. About dark, which is very late during the summertime in England, we came in sight of Southampton, where we saw our first

search lights adjusting their illuminations to various angles looking for airplanes. We reached the station, detrained and hiked about three miles to a rest camp. All of us were hungry as bears, as we had had nothing to eat since breakfast, except some sandwiches and the coffee at Derby.

Tired and hungry we had to wait several minutes before we were assigned any tents. This was very provoking, as we were so fatigued we could hardly stand up. We expected to have supper served us, but we were sadly disappointed. We found our tent very dirty. It was nearly midnight and all there was to do was find a clean spot and go to sleep. The British were criticised beyond reason, and had we thought that we were going to the front only to help the British we would probably have deserted and taken chances on getting back to the land of flapjack trees and honey ponds.

After a few hours' sleep we awoke and succeeded in getting some stewed meat, bread and tea. In looking over the camp we soon found a Y. M. C. A. canteen and supplemented our breakfast with some sandwiches and cocoa. Just

here allow me to inform you of the Englishman's love for tea, or "tay," as he calls it. At breakfast they have tay; at lunch they have tay; at six o'clock tea they have tay; at supper they have tay; and I suppose that at any other luncheon in the night they have tay. However, anything that happened after taps is mere conjecture with me.

Our rest camp was in a large forest, some five hundred years old, which was considered rather young in that country. The trees were large and beautiful and afforded plenty of shade. The citizens thronged the roadside to see the new bunch of Sammies and tell us the interesting tales of England and the news of the great war. Most of them thought that the war would be over before snow fell again, which greatly encouraged us. Although very friendly toward us, it was quite common for the Englishmen to complain because we had not entered the war sooner. On some of the transports this complaint became so chronic that a few difficulties resulted. The inquisitive American usually finds out things, so by night all of us had various tales of Europe, etc.

In the afternoon all of us who could, went to

Southampton. There we got an introduction to European ways and customs, among the first being the barber shop, where no real barber chairs were used, but ordinary straight chairs were used instead. The service was rather cheap in cost as well as reality. Englishmen measure distance by time. In the barber shop I asked how far it was to a certain theatre and was told that it was about three "minutes" up the street to the right. Our visit up town was well spent. We saw some good shows, learned how to count crowns, florins, shillings and pence. One peculiar thing to us was the barroom with the lady waitresses, where light wines and beers were sold.

After a good night's rest we spent the next day being mustered and getting ready to leave again. In the afternoon we marched back through the dusty town with the sun shining down at about 200 in the shade. Just before dark we embarked on the "Huntscraft," which was a small stock boat, and from all appearance we thought that the majority of England's sheep had been exported the previous trip. We did not care to sleep down in the "stable," so most of us slept up on deck to

enjoy the cool fresh air, and, believe me, it was some cool.

During the night we stole quietly across the English Channel and awoke the next morning in the harbor of Havre, France, and in the afternoon we debarked from the boat onto French soil.

CHAPTER V.

SUNNY FRANCE.

Now, our dreams were realized. We were in "Sunny France"; at least someone has called it sunny. We often wondered where it got that name, because it rained almost every day.

La Havre is one of the largest ports of France, and is one of the largest cotton ports in the world. It bears a striking resemblance to New Orleans, Louisiana. The large cotton warehouses, wharves, French houses and the French people impress one of the resemblance which is supplemented by the Seine River corresponding to the Mississippi. The chief contrast is the climate, as La Havre is by no means tropical. The signs on the buildings were exclusively in French, and the admiring throngs of people greeted us with "Bon jour," all of which made us realize the value of knowing the French language, and we resolved that if the war lasted another year we would then be able to *parlez vous Francais*.

From the ship we marched through town and out to a rest camp, which we were highly

pleased to see. We found the camp full of British soldiers, canteens and cooties. The barracks were none too sanitary, but they were so far ahead of the tents we had had at Southampton and the stock boat which we had come across the channel on that we made no serious complaint. We were agreeably surprised to find that the canteens had a good supply of smokes, beer and candy. The British had charge of the mess halls in the camp, and moving organizations who stopped in for a short rest were furnished meal tickets. We had already had all the tea we wanted, but now we got more, as well as plenty of marmalade. Taken as a whole, the chow was fairly good, and as we had eaten our reserve rations of corned beef and hard tack on the "Huntscraft," we relished our first meal very much.

All the bunch were so tired that none of us cared to go to town when night came. After walking around a bit over the camp, watching the English gambling devices and meeting a few American friends who had already seen service on the front, we retired to our hard bunks. The next morning we awoke feeling very refreshed in spite of the checker boards

across our backs, from sleeping on the rude wire bunks.

We did not tarry long in the rest camp. About dark on Tuesday, July 2nd, we again made up our packs, marched to the depot and entrained to go—where? We knew not. However, we did know that it was nearer the front.

We had a remarkable trip ahead of us. We were not to ride in the toy coaches, as we had in England, nor in the large Pullmans, as we had in the U. S. A. We were now to become acquainted with a new type of car, the "side door" Pullman. In the States we call them box cars; however, they were only about half the size of our standard box cars. One military train usually consisted of about fifty of these cars. Each one is labeled "40 hommes—8 chevaux," which indicated that either forty men or eight horses was the capacity. The distinction made between horses and men depends solely on which is desired to be carried. A car may be used for horses one day and men the next. Under ordinary circumstances men who had been accustomed to the luxurious travel accommodations of the United States would most likely complain seriously of such mode

of transportation, but this was war time, and was one of many instances in which discomfort was accepted by us as one of the unavoidable circumstances of the war.

These cars were the subject of much comment in the A. E. F. After the armistice was signed a casual who had just recently joined our regiment, and who had evidently just landed in France and had not moved very much through the war-torn area during the threatening days, was complaining about the small coaches, hard seats and lack of heat that he had had to contend with on his way to our organization. I told him that he ought to try riding in a box car with thirty-nine other men for about forty-eight hours with a good hard floor to sleep on. Just then another casual interrupted, "Forty men ain't very much; the car I rode in had thirty men and four mules." A negro in the A. E. F. recently remarked, "When dey hab anudder wah I wants to be one ob dem dar chevaux." One of his friends inquired why he wanted to be a chevaux, and he replied, "Cause dey don't put but eight of dem in one cah."

With various comments about our new Pull-

mans, we crawled in. The usual number (forty) were loaded in each car, as well as all of our equipment and two-days' reserve rations, the latter consisting of canned goods, hard tack and jam. It was good dark when we pulled out. As we had no lights all there was to do was to go to bed, or at least lie down on the floor and try to sleep. Most of us slept in our overcoats and did not unroll our blankets. We awoke the next morning, and after eating our cold breakfast, we became intensely interested in the beautiful scenery which was on all sides of us. We soon pulled into a little station where coffee was served, and after drinking five or six times as much as one usually does in civilian life we felt almost like men.

The road we were on follows the beautiful Seine River. The latter is a gay sight in the summertime. A few small boats here and there with a few fishermen and a few bathers are scattered all along the river. Beautiful grain-covered hills were all around us, which somewhat resembled England.

On our way we met several trainloads of wounded British on their way to "Blighty." Some of the boys remarked that they were

evidently evacuating the front more rapidly than we could replace them.

Every few minutes as we rolled along we would pull into another small village, which was always properly announced by the engine's sharp whistle. It did not seem like a man-sized whistle. Every time I heard it it reminded me so much of the old merry-go-round at the County Fair or the Old Soldiers' Reunion that I had visions of lemonade stands, knife racks, doll racks, ice cream cones, Bobo, the world's famous gorilla, and a great throng of people covered with dust and confetti, and I could almost hear the eloquent rhythm flowing from the silvery tongue of the orator of the day as he analyzed the various planks in the platform. Some of the boys compared the whistle with that of a peanut roaster. One fellow said that he was tired of corn willy and that if the train would stop long enough he would go and buy enough popcorn and peanuts for the crowd.

We were so crowded for space that two of the boys came to blows over a much coveted corner. A common friend promptly separated them before any injury was done to any-

one except himself. The next day the victim said that six men slept on the space that the two were fighting over.

At the larger stations, instead of seeing the signs, "Entrance" and "Exit," there appeared the corresponding French words, "Entree" and "Sortie." In Buffalo, N. Y., and in England we had seen women working in the railroad yards cleaning coaches, etc., but now we had mademoiselles for brakemen.

We soon passed through Versailles and got a glimpse of the magnificent palace built by the Louises at such an enormous expense that it finally germinated the French Revolution. Versailles is one of the suburbs of Paris, being only eighteen kilometers from the heart of the great capital city. We came no closer to Paris. We soon passed along directly south of the French capital, but could see only the Eiffel Tower.

On and on we rolled, occasionally stopping to meet another train loaded with wounded soldiers from the front. Some of them were exclusively hospital trains. Soon we could hear the heavy artillery in the distance, and our conception of the tremendous thunder on

the Western front was no longer drawn merely from the sections of war news in the American daily papers. During our short stops all along many of us pulled some of the long grass to improve our beds a bit. We had supper and were soon trying to slumber in our elaborate beds. We endured another night of it, and at sunrise the next morning we were not far from our destination. We arrived at Recey-sur-Ource about 10 a. m. on July 4th. We soon detrained, and after standing around in the dust a while, we started off among the hills in various directions. We celebrated the holiday by marching with our packs and eating corned beef and hard tack for our lunch on the way.

"E" and "D" Companies went to Colmelle-Bas, "F" Company to Chauzey, Train Company to Be Neurve and Headquarters and "C" Company to Bure les Templiers. The latter place was already occupied by "A" and "B" Companies who had preceded us some six or seven days. Their kitchens were in good working order, which we greatly appreciated, as we had been living on canned goods for the previous two days.

It was at Bure les Templiers that we learned

to parlez Francais a little. At least we managed to buy milk, wine and such little things as villages of that type afforded. We could also manage to get the natives to wash our clothes for us.

In La Havre we had gotten fairly well acquainted with French money; we knew that a franc was worth 100 centimes. The natives called five centimes one "sous," which is roughly equivalent to an American cent. Most of the French money was paper, in bills of 20, 10, 5, 2, 1 and 1-2 francs. The majority of the two latter denominations had been issued by the Chambers of Commerce of the different "Departments," or states, since the war had begun. They were valid only in the locality where they were issued. There were a few 50, 100 and 500 franc bills, but we did not see very many of those. Ofttimes the bills became badly mutilated, but they were always good so long as the number was legible. Among the coins 5 franc pieces were rare, 2, 1 and 1-2 franc silver pieces being the most common. There were nickel coins of 1-4 franc and nickel and copper coins of 10 and 5 centimes. We soon

were counting in francs exclusively and forgot what real money looked like.

We were not long in learning the life of the French peasants. The farmers do not live on their respective farms as in America, but are all congregated in small villages. The houses are large and built of stone, which affords good and warm protection during the severe winters. The houses in the smallest villages are usually covered with rude slate instead of the red tiling that is to be found in all the cities. In one building there is room for the family, the cattle, rabbits, sheep, chickens, and all are huddled together in alarmingly close proximity.

The chief draught animals were the oxen and the milk cows. Horses were scarce, and there were no mules at all. Of course it might have been entirely different in normal times before the war.

As France is only about three-fourths the size of Texas, it is evident that there are many natural resources, and farming is more intensified than in most parts of the United States. Quite a few of those families lived on the modest produce of a garden. The hills were cov-

ered with little patches of wheat, oats, barley and clover. The entire crop being in small strips of one-half acre or less each. The grain is threshed by a tread-power machine, which is operated by a horse walking, or militarily speaking, "marking time," on an inclined rolling belt which is connected to the cylinder. In some instances the threshing is done by small hand machines. Most of the grain is cut by the common mower. Some of the smallest patches are cut with the ordinary scythe. There are a few man-sized binders for the larger crops.

Our locality was some twenty-five miles from the Switzerland border, and there were many natural forests and many artificial ones. In the latter the trees were planted in check-rows, which ameliorates the beauty of the groves. No one can cut one of those trees without a permit from the Government, not even a Sammy. Some of these trees afforded splendid material for various war purposes, and some of the old men worked in the forests during the long days doing their bit.

The roads in France are very good and are usually beautified by a row of poplar or sycamore trees on each side. Distances and direc-

tions are marked at every crossroads, and there is also a post every one-tenth of a kilometer indicating the distance from the initial point of that particular route. The roads were very dusty in dry weather, which was aggravated by the heavy A. E. F. traffic. We used motor sidecars for messenger service, and it was no uncommon sight to see the occupants so bedimmed with dust that they were not recognizable.

From the hills one can often count eight or nine of the little villages. Each has its tall church, or église, the steeple penetrating the sky. There is also the school (école), and the Mairie, or mayor's office in each one of the villages.

The water supply comes from the springs in the hills whence it is piped to the town, and there is always an abundance of good clear water flowing from the fountains, which provoked us very much, because we had orders not to drink any water without first chlorinating it. The women folk did their washing in the reservoirs, the largest of which was usually near the school building. They washed by hand and in the cold water, and it was remark-

able how clean they could get our dirty and greasy clothes by washing them in that manner.

We were in the province of Cote d'Or. There was not much wine growing in that vicinity, but each little town had its cafe where wine was sold in abundance. There was also various bric-a-brac in the little stores, and in addition to that, itinerant vendors came through with a variety of vegetables, fruits and nuts. We usually spent a few francs and sous with them.

While in Bure we visited the cemetery and were greatly impressed with the pretty bead designs which the French make to decorate the graves. Around the old court back of the church we noticed some old stone coffins, and upon inquiry we learned that we were in the original home of the Knights Templar. We secured a history of that organization, which I am taking the liberty to reproduce in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

BURE LES TEMPLIERS.

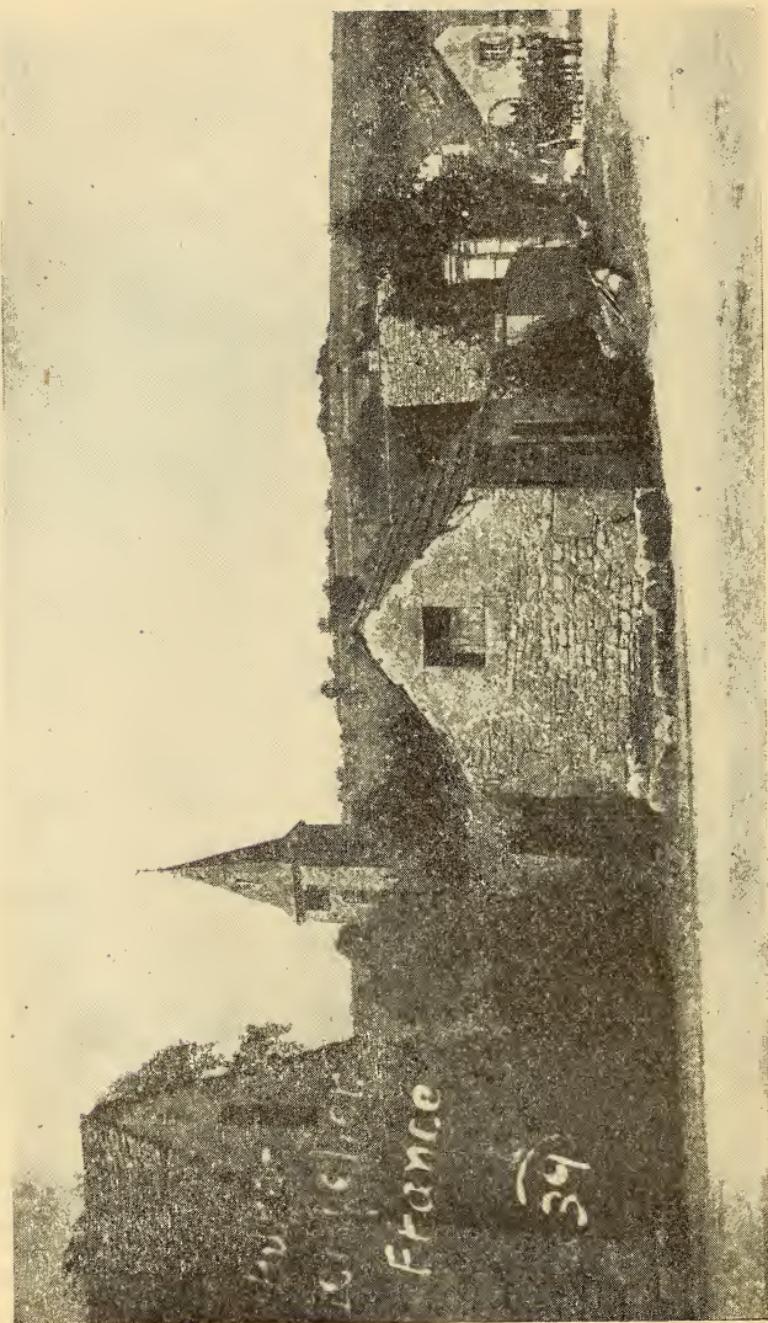
(Compiled from M. Hout.)

“Bure” (i. e., place abounding in water, from Latin “buris,” watering place), which has existed since the Gallic Era, takes its name from Bure les Templiers, since the Templars established themselves there in 1120, which was two years after the foundation of their order.

In 1118 several French knights, companions of Godfrey de Bouillon, leader of the first crusades, conceived the plan of associating themselves and consecrating their lives to the service of God and the defense of the Holy Places. They made their vows and their pledge before the patriarch of the Holy City, and established themselves on a place quite near the temple, whence they received the name “Templars.” They were nine in number, and chief among them was Hugh de Payons, whom some believe to have been of the noble family of the counts of Champagne.

In 1128 their number was still the same; they had not grown; and whether it was that nobody had presented himself for admission into the so-

Bure les Templiers (Showing Church Built in the Middle Ages).



ciety, or that their order not having been confirmed they refused all applicants. Whatever the reason, Hugh de Payons left Jerusalem to return West, and the same year he presented himself before the council then assembling at Troy under the Presidency of Cardinal Matthew, Papal legate, for the purpose of soliciting the confirmation of his order. He was accompanied by some of his other Knights: Roland, Godfrey, Jeffrey, Bis-sot, Payons de Montdidier and Archambaut St. Amand, with whom he presented himself on the part of the Pope who addressed them to the coun-cil. The confirmation they requested was given them, and St. Bernard, who assisted at the coun-cil, was charged with giving the rule. This rule was drawn up, however, by one Jean Michel, upon whom St. Bernard had placed this duty. At the same time they were given the white coat, to which, later in 1146, Pope Eugene III. added the red cross to be worn on the mantles.

Thenceforth was definitely constituted the Order of the Templars, an order at once religious and military. Each Knight had to take the vows of chastity, obedience and poverty. All the broth-ers had to assist at the offices of the day and the night. The use was permitted them only three

days during the week, and they observed two lenten seasons, one before Easter and the other before Christmas. They were obliged, moreover, to pledge themselves to the recovery of the Holy Lands through force of arms and its deliverance from the infidel yoke.

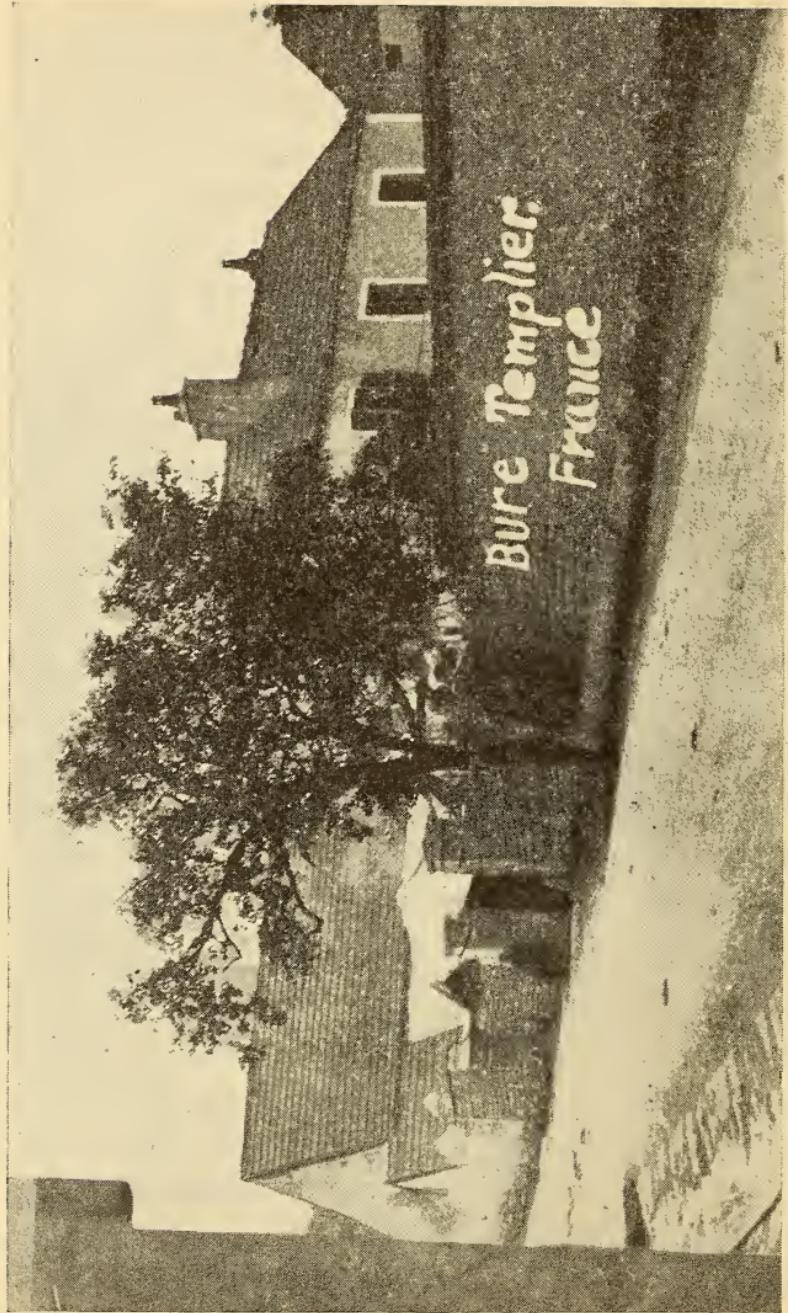
They were enjoined to wear their hair short, their beard long, and to sleep fully dressed, ready to take arms at the first signal. Each Templar could have three horses and a squire, but he could have no more than three horses. Let us add that the head of the order bore the title of "Grand Master." Such were the chief points of the rule of the Templars.

An order which was thus united with arms and prayer could not fail to gain sympathy and grow rapidly. The faith so lively in those days led many noblemen to monastic life; but the ardent and bellicose humor of the barons of the Middle Ages could not always reconcile itself to silence and the tranquility of the cloister. They needed action, and they were naturally drawn to an order which answered so well these needs of the heart —to work for the glory of God and to exert themselves upon the field of battle. The Templars multiplied rapidly, and well before the end of the

century which saw their foundation they had already grown very numerous and very powerful.

But we are slow to mention the name of the first lord of our country to enroll himself under the banner of the Templars, and who gave them ground for their first establishment in Burgundy. This Lord was Payon of Bure. Payon was one of the principal nobles of the Lordship of Grancey le Chateau, and Ramald, Lord of Grancey, had no richer vassal nor more powerful.

The village of Bure, with its territory and its revenues, was his almost entirely. He himself lived in the midst of his serfs, and there is reason to believe that his fortress was situated in the middle of the village, quite near and to the east of the church, dominating and protecting the road which passed beneath its walls. Owner of a lordship so considerable, Payen could have enjoyed the luxuries of life and figured in the world with much honor. He could have traversed the seas to fight the infidels and still have retained his goods and his liberty, but this was not for him. The kind of life to which Hugh de Payon and his companions had consecrated themselves appealed more to the generosity of his heart and the ardor of his faith. He resolved to imitate and



Bure Tempier.
France

follow them, and he gave to the young order not only his person, but his goods. In an affair of that nature, however, Payen did not wish to act without advice. He revealed his project to the other lords, his friends, and above all he consulted his superiors, Guillencus of Langres, his bishop, and Ramald of Grancey, his suzerain lord. Encouraged on all sides, he accomplished his designs and yielded up himself, his goods, his town and its dependencies.

The deed was drawn up by Guillencus and all precautions usual in such cases were taken to assure to the Templars the peaceful possession of all the goods that had just been given them. These precautions consisted in having the donation approved by all those who, by whatever right, might trouble the religious order with their claims. Payen was the vassal of Ramald for the village of Bure; he could not grant it without the approval of his liege, but Ramald gave it all the more willingly because he had advised it. These approbations were made in the presence of a crowd of lords, among others, Guy de Chanlency. Ebers, Count of Sault, granted his approval, as did his wife, his children and his brother, Vittoline, in the presence of the Bishop of Langres,

and the Duke of Burgundy. Ebers of Sault, sprung of the house of Grancey, could have reserved certain rights or some pretension to the village of Bure, and it was by reason of such that the grant of Payen was submitted to him for approval.

Before taking the road to Jerusalem, Payen solicited from Ramald, his wife and children a special authorization upon the subject of one Lecomoe, who was the mayor or Alderman of Bure. This approbation was given by Ramald at the hands of his seneschal Robert.

The grant was made in the time of Guillencus of Langres. Consequently it can be said not to have existed prior to 1128 nor subsequent to 1136, as Guillencus was Bishop during this decade. A list of the titles of the priory of Champagne fixed it at 1132. Even if this latter date is inexact it is not far from correct.

Thus came the Templars in possession of Bure and its territory. It is not known whether the inhabitants mourned Payens or not; but if they did, they were easily consoled at the sight of their new lords whose double profession of religions and men-at-arms seemed to give promise of a life at once sweet and tranquil. As Knights in fact,

they were obliged to protect them from incursions and attacks without.

However it may be, it is at Bure that the Templars founded one of the first, if not the first, of the establishment they had in France, and that establishment which bore the title of Preceptory, Baillery, or Commander was the cradle from which sprang the Order in the provinces of Burgundy and Champagne. Furthermore, Jeffrey, Bishop of Langres, gave them in 1163 the Church of Voulains, and also that of Langlay, and later provided them with forest and demesnes in 1236 and 1237.

One of the dukes of Burgundy, Hugh III., on his part in 1171 conceded to them the rights and fiefs belonging to him at Voulaines and Langlay. What were the names of the first Knights living at Bure, the date of their installation, are questions that cannot be answered. Nevertheless, it is about certain that after the grant and the departure of Payen, the Grandmaster Hugh of Payen hastened to install two or three of his chevaliers as much to govern the lordship and oversee the revenues as to rally around him those of the young noblemen who might wish to enroll themselves under the banner of the Templars. They

were lodged very near and to the east of the church, very probably in the fortress of Payen, who had, as we have just said, occupied that place.

Later, grown rich and numerous, they were forced to add new buildings to their fortress; they had to make room for themselves and to extend the church itself, which, while remaining the parish church of the town, was enclosed within the fortifications and regarded as their property. Today the Templar has disappeared. There remains still, however, numerous evidences of its servitude. The arcades of the subterranean caves and of the stables which are very well preserved and which the tourists admire with certain emotion are proof of the ingenuity of those religions. The thickness of the walls, the solidity of the woodwork, the loopholes still exist looking out upon the departmental road, all assured them a retreat, and the fact that stone coffins have been found in the interior court causes one to suppose that their cemetery was placed beside the church within the same enclosure. One may still see the escutcheon of the order sealed in the wall of the square tower.

In 1181, Eudes, first son of Rainand II., retired

into the house of Bure, where he assumed the habit of the Templars. They were very glad to receive a man of such rank who, moreover, did not come with empty hands. He was in truth the most powerful lord of these parts after the Duke of Burgundy and the Count of Champagne.

Eudes I. died in the Bure house in 1197 at a well advanced age. After the funeral, which was quite pompous, those who had assisted at the ceremonies being gathered in the Monastery, the preceptor or commander of Bure, who was named William Boldes, called for silence. After having announced that Eudes had made over the house of Bure, numerous alms, of which he had the deed and the charter, he asked consent for the reading of that charter. Being agreeable to all the scroll was placed in the hands of the Abbot of St. Benigne, son of the deceased, who read it in the presence of the Lord of Grancey, principal party interested, and a great number of other nobles. Eudes, Lord of Grancey, approved the contents and moreover promised to take under his protection and guardianship all the property of the house of Bure without any intent of arrogating to himself, therefore, any of its rights. As witnesses they brought forth Brother Otho,

Cure of Bure, Rodolphe of Menesbles, William of Montmoyen and some other.

After the extinction of the congregation of the Temple, Bure became a cure of Malta with the title of Mother Church, having branches of other parishes, Romprey, La Foret, Terrefondree and Chatellenct. The Grand Friar of Champagne, residing at Voulaines, was feudal Lord of Bure and its Commandery. In 1371, Philip the Hardy, by letters patent, dated at Rouves, and confirmed by King Charles V., granted freedom from privileges to the inhabitants who had grown so impoverished, so annihilated, that the majority had left the place reduced to three feux (one feux appears to have represented five persons). It is believed that many returned, since, according to Courtepee, Bure had 1000 souls after that emancipation.

In 1572, Bure belonged to the Knights of St. John or Knights Hospitalers, successors to the Templars, and it remained this until the French Revolution, but sometime prior to 1572, these Knights had abandoned Bure to take up their residence at Epailly near Montigny-sur-Aube. Still Bure continued to bear the title of Commandery, and instead of having its Commander

proper it had none other than the Grand Prior himself.

The Grand Prior Michel of Fevres, on the 15th of August, 1572, sold to John Corbolin Miller of Conclois "this house and Maner of adventure," which was then in a state of ruin, with its chattels, fields, and lands dependent upon it; said house of adventure was near and contiguous to the house of Conclois.

Toward 1579 the servitude of Mortmain had long grown insupportable to the inhabitants. They had made several attempts at emancipation and had tried to declare themselves burghers and subjects of the King, but they had failed, and tired of war, they had avowed and recognized that they were really in a state of servitude, serfs of the Grand Prior.

Toward the end of the 16th century they were contemplating a new attempt, but feeling that they could not succeed and being so advised, they addressed themselves in 1588 to their Lord, petitioning him them freedom from Mortmain.

The Grand Prior received favorably their request, desiring to relieve them and wishing also to see repeopled the village of Bure, now greatly afflicted through contagion and the passing

arouses, "considering in time," he said, "that servitude and conditions of Mortmain are contrary to liberty, to which men were created by God in the beginning of the world," the Grand Prior declared granted to the people of Bure "that which they demanded."

CHAPTER VII.

TRAINING FOR ACTION.

After our arrival in the vicinity of Recey sur Ource, we first set to work cleaning out barns, vacant houses, etc., for our new homes. This was soon accomplished, most of the men getting barns or old houses which had been vacant for some time.

The writer with eight others was billeted in the upstairs of an old annex to the old historical church, which had been built by the aforesaid Templars. Our furniture consisted of our personal equipment and our bed sacks filled with hay. One of our boys who had been a carpenter in civilian life found some planks and made himself a real good bedstead, which served for a lounge for all of us during the day. Our entree and sortie was a ladder on the outside of the building. To demonstrate that we were hardened well enough to go into the trenches some of us would fall down the ladder occasionally, without any serious injury.

Now that we were billeted, the next program was the real training schedule at which we put

in from eight to fourteen hours per day. The days were much longer than our summer days back home because we were so much farther north. In July, sunrise was about 5 a. m. and sunset about 9 p. m. Likewise the winter nights were exceedingly long.

Reveille was at 5:45, at which was given physical exercise for about fifteen minutes. Breakfast was at 6 a. m. Then a long day of various kinds of training followed.

Our infantry and Machine Gun regiments were near us. Division Headquarters was at Aigne le Duc. Everything was working, preparing us for the trenches. The Engineer program was the regular infantry drill, construction of barbed wire entanglements, digging trenches and dug-outs and extensive reconnaissance and topographical work.

The infantry regiments were specializing on their work. Target ranges were erected and the bull's eye received many rounds of ammunition. The bayonet drill was given particular attention. Anyone passing along observing them rushing at each other like mad bulls and growling like bears knew that the fatal day for Fritz was not far distant. From the number of lacerated abdo-

mens we later saw among the unfortunate Huns it was quite evident that our doughboys knew how to handle the bayonet.

The Medical Corps had physical exercise, drilling, classes in Anatomy and first aid and the gas mask drill. We also practiced carrying patients in the newly constructed trenches which was SOME work.

We were soon issued our gas masks and helmets, or tin derbies, and overseas caps. It was then that we realized more than ever before that the Ninetieth Division would probably play an important part in the elimination of the Kaiser.

The iron helmet can be used for more different things than any other article of the soldier's equipment. When not in actual combat we wore our overseas caps and used our helmets for a general junk basket. Ofttimes, especially on long hikes when the ground was muddy, it made a splendid seat during the short fall out periods. At nights it was good for a pillow or a candle stand. On the front where extra ones could be found by the score we often stripped them of their padding and used them for wash pans, and even mess kits. The helmet is a great protector from the flying

fragments and with the exception of the gas mask it was usually our most accessible article of equipment on the front. It seemingly has great powers of expansion. On long hikes it often feels like it is the size of an ordinary bath tub on your head, while among the bursting shells when you try to hide under it it seems like an ordinary thimble. The gas mask too could be used for many things, such as a writing desk or a dinner table.

The importance of the gas mask drill was emphasized by our regimental commander and our particular regiment gave special attention to that mode of defense. It was pointed out that statistics showed that Engineer Regiments lost more heavily from gas than all other causes combined. As we realized that it was a question solely of our own safety we manifested great interest in learning how to use the gas mask. We often ran relay races having to put the masks on after the signal to start had been given.

Every feature of combat warfare was thrashed out thoroughly and no point of defense was neglected during our entire six weeks training.

Our environments were such that our recreations were rather meagre. A "Y. M. C. A."

was soon installed at our place and we gathered around at noon and after retreat to buy smokes, canned fruits, chocolate, etc., or whatever we could get and read the New York Herald, Daily Mail or Chicago Tribune, one of which was usually posted where all could read.

After supper the wine houses were frequented and the boys soon learned to give an order in French. "Je veux une verre du vin, s'il vous plait." There were very few intoxications. The usual good conduct of the American soldier was consistently maintained.

It was during these days of suspense that we first began to indulge in army gossip. Any messenger or truck driver with any news from the front encountered quite a "barrage" of interrogations. The gossip would spread up and down the chow lines which were real long lines. We no longer ate our meals at the mess halls as we had done at Camp Travis.

Ofttimes the evenings would be spent talking or trying to talk to the French civilians, which consisted mostly of the extremely aged and young. All the young men were either on the Front or were buried near the Front in a hero's

grave, "Somewhere in France." Almost all the young girls were filling men's places in the large cities. Occasionally we would find a Frenchman wounded with an honorable discharge. He would give us some interesting tales of the horrible front. Often some poor French mother told us of how her son had died in "La guerre."

Later the "Y" began to give picture shows. A few good lecturers paid us visits and predicted great things for us on the front. Later we were entertained with some good musical talent. All athletics were encouraged.

On July 14th, Bastile Day, all of our regiment assembled at Headquarters at Bure les Templiers to help the citizens celebrate. The programme consisted of good music and short speeches by the local mayor and some of our officers. A good baseball game followed. The writer missed that affair as I had to go to Colmes les Bas and when my duties were finished there I visited some friends of Co. M, 359th Infantry, who had just come into Colmes les Haut, and heard them tell of their trip to wonderful London on July 4th.

It was during our stay here that the Allies' series of victories began. The Chateau Thierry

salient was eliminated and everything looked encouraging. We all began to order a turkey dinner for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We soon got orders to move.

CHAPTER VIII.

OFF TO THE FRONT.

On August 17th, we began to move. As usual, various rumors began to spread as to where we were going. Someone said that we were going to Italy because an orderly told him that a K. P. said that one of the wagoners told him that he got it straight. Others said that we were going to Chateau Thierry. We always found out where we were going after we reached our destination.

The French people apparently regretted to see us leave. They seemed to have enjoyed our companionship and they sympathized with us because we were going to that awful front. Currants and plums were ripe and flowers in full bloom and the French children gave us lots of fruit and flowers as we told them "au revoir."

Headquarters moved August 18th, which was Sunday. We did not have even box cars to ride in this time, our conveyance was merely good strong legs and hobnail shoes. We left Bure les Templiers about sunrise and started

down the dusty road toward Recey sur Ource. It soon became official news that regardless of what our destination would be we would hike to Chatillon sur Seine to entrain.

In the beginning of the day all was well. It was cool and all of us were full of pep. We would hike fifty minutes and rest ten in each hour. Later in the day it began to get warm and the boys began to fall out with blistered feet. The ambulance soon became a regular excursion bus.

We were only about 9 kilometers from our destination when we halted for dinner. We had our kitchens with us and we enjoyed some good beans, roast, bread and coffee. After bathing our feet in a cool stream nearby and enjoying a good rest we continued our journey.

We reached Chatillon just before sundown and soon steered out toward a stubble field which was our new camp. Here we stretched our pup tents out in the open. We enjoyed this camping place as it was in such a pretty place. The country was mostly prairie, there being very little timber except along the Seine. This was a great grain country and far more beautiful than in the Recey vicinity.

After eating supper some of us went down to the river and took a cold bath. Then we went A. W. O. L. to town for a little while. Mr. Reader, if you are not acquainted with the term "A. W. O. L." do not think that it is a code for anything. It simply stands for "Absent Without Leave." It is one of the most common offenses in the army and the violations are more numerous than the commanding officer ever knows about. Of course, the main crime in violating the numerous articles of war is not really the violation, but being caught.

Chatillon was not very large, but since we had been billeted in the little peasant village we thought it was quite a city. One is easily fooled in the size of the French or German towns by merely loafing through them, as all the residences and stores are together. When one had gone through the town he had seen it all, not merely the business section as would have been the case in our American cities.

We were not to linger long in the beautiful city on the Seine. After enjoying a good night's rest on the rocks and stubble we arose and ate a good hearty breakfast. Then we

rolled our packs again and started out. We marched to the station to find that our box car special would not be ready until in the afternoon. We passed the time off quite well. We found a "Y" hut which served hot chocolate, coffee, and had various and sundry fruits and candies and cigarettes. Some "acheted" a great deal from the French stores and some cognac and vin rouge was consumed.

About 4 p. m. we crawled into our box cars and started on our way northeastward. Our trip resembled the one from La Havre to Recey a great deal. Just before night we stopped near a large British aviation field and the Tommies brought us lots of cakes and coffee from the nearby canteen. The next morning there were various stories of how hard the floor was or how the other fellow's hobnails felt in one's face. One certain sergeant who theretofore had been rather slow to criticize the War Department in any particular, awoke in anger saying that his hip had bored a hole in the floor of the car and that he wished that a few of the Washington "warriors" had to ride in box cars for a spell. He said that if such were the case there

would soon be marked improvement in our mode of transportation.

We passed near the old home of Jeanne d'Arc and reached Toul about 1 p. m. From Toul we marched down the dusty road to Blenod les Toul which was about ten kilometers away. We found good billets in Blenod and enjoyed some muchly needed rest. The gossip varied as to how long we would stay there. The majority thought that we would only stay two or three days, which proved to be correct. We were willing to spend a month or more there because we had the best quarters we had had since we had left Camp Travis. The Second Battalion followed us the next day, having entrained at Le Tracey, whence they had hiked from Colmes les Bas.

It now seemed to us that we were really in the front lines. The planes were buzzing all around us as if we were in a bee hive. The roar of cannon was distinctly audible. Lights were forbidden after 8 o'clock and all precautions of safety were observed.

Our pleasant stay was abruptly ended. About dark on the 22nd the Second Battalion moved out for the trenches and the next night

the First Battalion and Headquarters pursued the same course. This time we travelled in trucks, which had to be operated without lights as the least indication of our whereabouts would expose us to the danger of the enemy planes above.

Our first destination was a little village on a little prairie hill. It was about four hours ride from Blenod and each battalion spent the remainder of the night and the following day there after starting for the front. The little valley below was lined with soldiers and we had to eat our meals in squads or less to avoid detection. All through the night the planes played the little tune, "Where are you?" while we tried to sleep.

Friday night we continued our journey to the front. On Saturday morning, August 24th, about 1 a. m., Headquarters and Train companies arrived at Bois de Villers, which was to be our home for a few days. Next morning some private discovered a dignified major sleeping peacefully underneath a large tree with all of his clothes on and he described the scene as being one of the horrors of war.

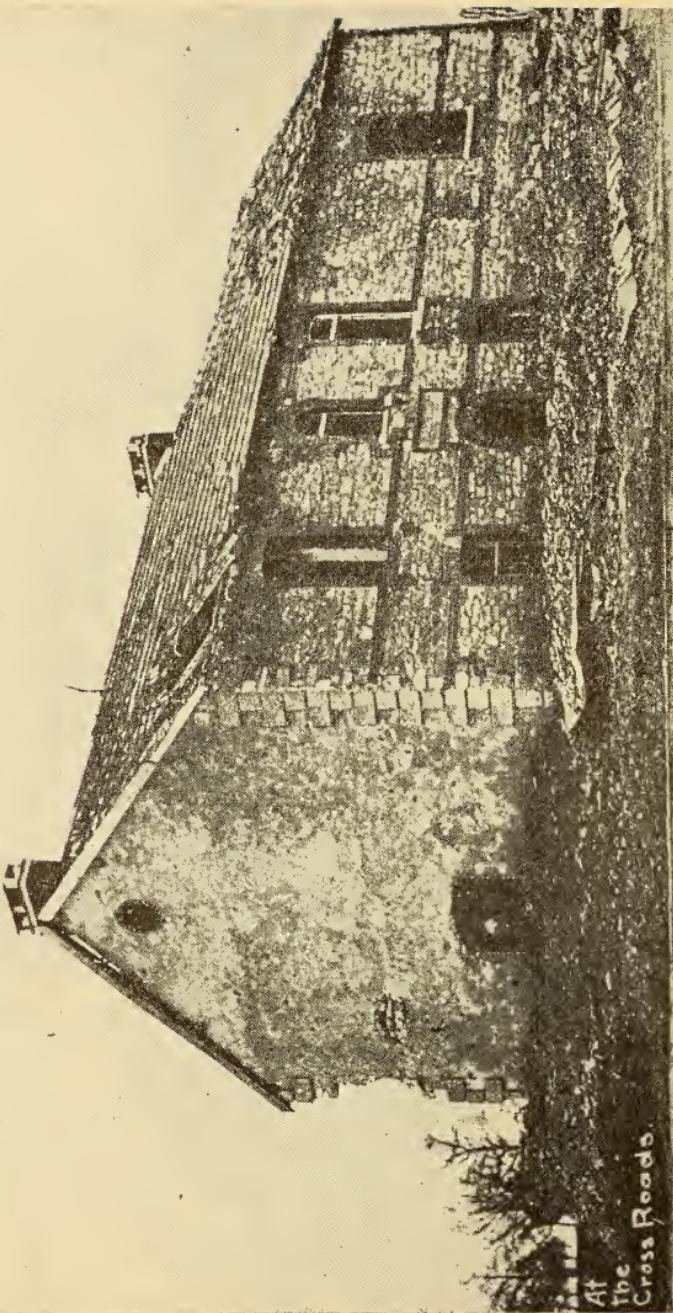
In these woods we found some very rude,

floorless French barracks which contained some old bunks, also very rude. With some green leaves from the numerous trees and some old straw we made some very comfortable beds. The woods were so dense that we could hardly see from one barracks to another and the trails which served for streets were made more conspicuous by a white string.

Here we began to learn the value of camouflage. Everything was camouflaged. The art of making something like it isn't was wonderful. Any supplies or tools left out in the open were camouflaged with brush. There was a big factory in Dijon making nothing but camouflage. Each truck and wagon was covered with specially designed camouflage, which consisted of very flexible wire strung with brown fuzzy like scraps of cloth. The roads had tall camouflaged fences on the side next to the enemy's lines, which prevented the observation balloons from seeing the moving traffic. Of course that would not prevent the planes from detecting the road, but since the actual moving traffic was the chief concern the scheme was quite practicable. All the guns, tents, dugouts and in fact everything was camouflaged to fool the enemy. Snipers wore

uniforms with twigs of leaves and grass sewed on which made such a perfect resemblance to Mother Earth that they could hardly be seen.

Our First Battalion was located at St. Jean, doing construction work for the 179th Brigade. The Second Battalion was at Jezainville with the 180th Brigade. Not far from our "Bois" de Villers we found a Salvation Army Hut which furnished us plenty of candies, cakes, dough-nuts, etc. It seemed preposterous to see real American ladies in such a desolate, lonesome place and it sometimes took a half dozen doughnuts to convince us that they were real. Much to our dissatisfaction the hut moved within a few days after our arrival, as it was attached to an organization that was relieved. Our Division Commissary moved into the hut and we then had plenty of milk, chocolate, sugar, canned fruit and tobacco. We lived at ease for a while.



At
The
Cross Roads.

At the Cross-Roads in the Quiet Sector.

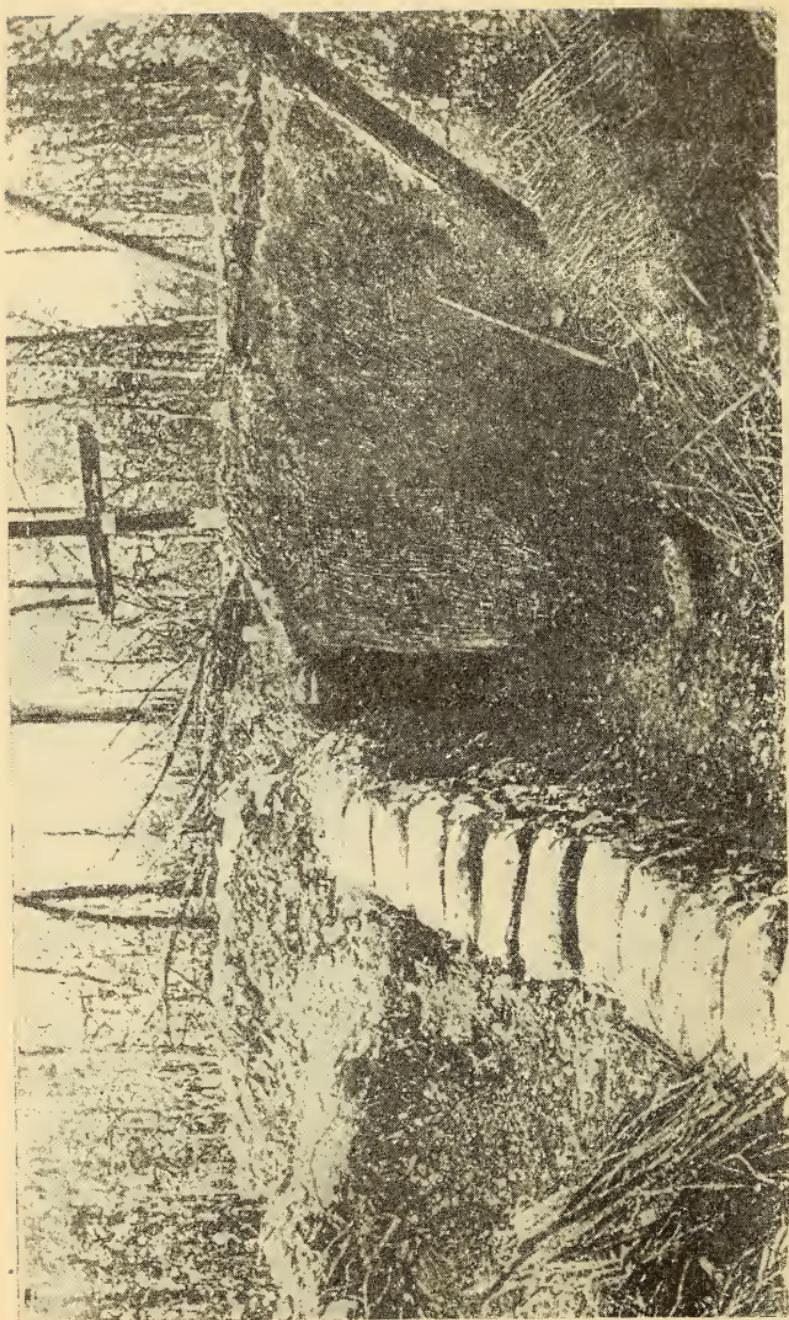
CHAPTER IX.

A QUIET SECTOR.

We found ourselves in a quiet sector; at least, it was comparatively quiet so long as we elected that it be so.

In Bois de Villers our view was obstructed by the dense thickets. Our first night in those woods was interrupted by the dropping of some bombs from Fritz's plane, which struck an ammunition dump nearby and caused considerable excitement and moving about. Almost every night Fritz would buzz around over us and sometimes kick out his end gate. This was our first real excitement and it interfered with our sleep a wee bit. On one occasion some automobile trucks just outside the woods exploded and caused great alarm.

There was not much work to do. We were merely waiting for mature time. It was here we first began to mingle with the French soldiers. The woods covered the area of some 200 acres and the dense thicket was filled with artillery and Frenchmen. They would tell us that the "Boches" were "finis" and that "la



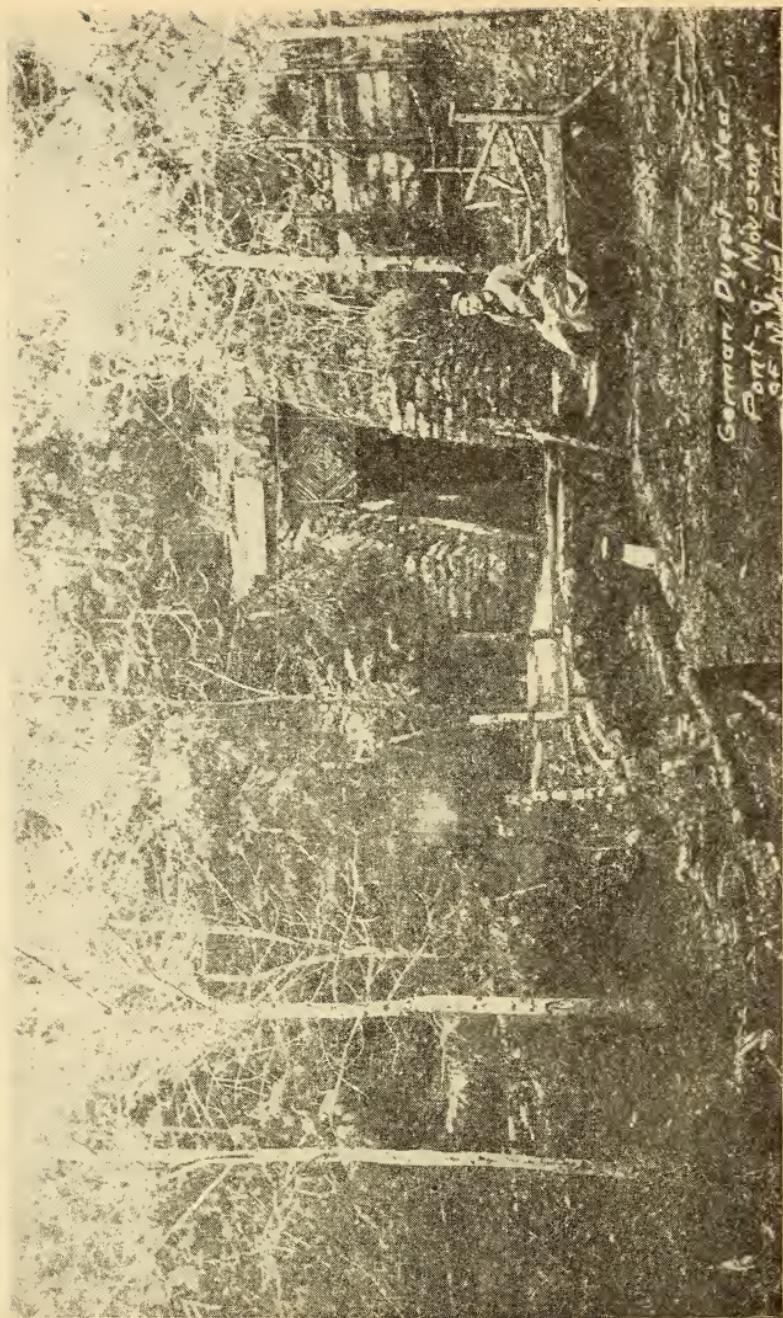
Trenches in the Quiet Sector.

guerre" would be over "tout de suite." Some of these weary poilus had been in the war since it started. Many had fought at Cantigny with the Americans and they spoke very complimentary of the bravery shown by our boys. Along with the information they usually gave us some vin rouge to make things all the merrier. They were issued this wine the same as we were issued our chow and their canteens were used exclusively for wine instead of water.

Although the majority of these allies of ours were apparently happy, many careworn faces indicated sad hearts. Almost all had been fighting at least one year without having had a furlough. Some had been wounded and many had brothers and in some instances, fathers, who had die on the battlefield. The bunch included soldiers from every part of France. Many had fought at Verdun when the nation had said "They shall not pass"; some had fought at the first battle of the Marne and at St. Quentin. Many of these men had seen their homes torn to fragments and bisected by trenches.

There was one fellow in the bunch who, prior

German Dugout Near
Pont-a-Mousson



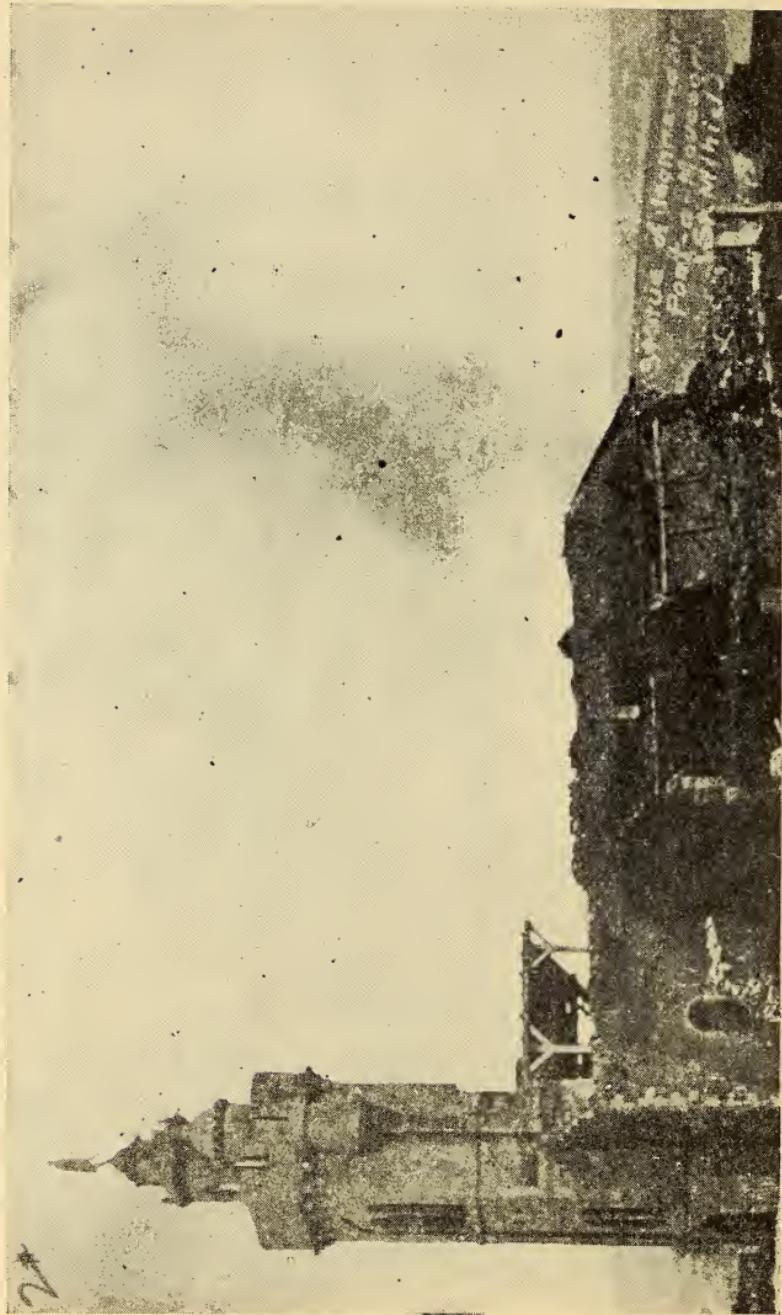
German Dugout near Pont-a-Mousson.

to the war, had been employed by the French government in the customs service in India. He could speak good English and he delighted in telling of the various aspects of the war, the battles he had experienced and in explaining the values of the various long range guns.

There was a lieutenant and a sergeant who proved to be good entertainers with the violin and guitar and the strains of the many beautiful French waltzes as well as the French National Anthem "Marseillaise" floated out among the stillness of the woods almost every night.

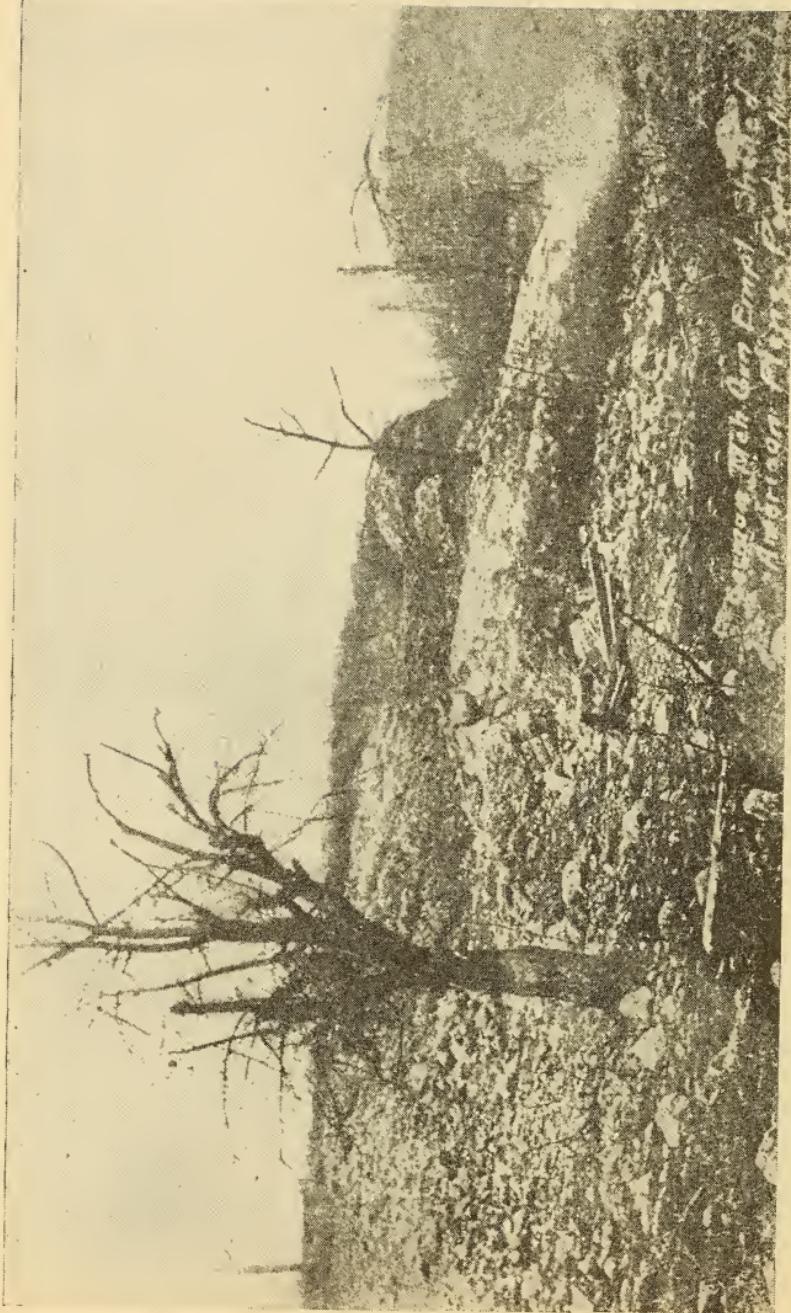
Among the variety of poilus, were the Algerian negroes who could speak only the French language. Some interesting things happened when our American negroes encountered them. An Engineer Regiment of our negroes was working on the road near us. One day one of the blacks from Dixie met one of the Algerians and forthwith began asking various fool questions, but the latter couldn't "compree" and he would shake his head and mutter something which the American could not understand. Losing patience with the Algerian the black Yank said "What kind of a

Statue of Jeanne-d'Arc, Pont-a-Mousson.



niggar is yo, anyhow, yo fool you. Yo don't even know yoah own language."

Almost every day we saw the enemy anti-aircraft guns trying to bring down our observation balloons and they were sometimes successful. Sometimes the enemy planes would venture over to assist their guns and sharp battles usually followed. One morning a Dutch plane came over and set fire to one of our "sausages," dodged our planes and flew back within his own lines safely. One of our boys became utterly disgusted with our aerial activity, he lost patience and began cussing that branch of the service from San Francisco both ways, criticizing everyone who had ever had anything to do with it. He was so severe that he would have been almost subject to a court-martial. We threatened to give him a kangaroo trial, but upon his promise to go to the Salvation Army Hut and bring us some candy and doughnuts we exonerated him. Such was the aerial excitement. The writer spent one entire afternoon sitting in the edge of the beautiful pine grove reading an old magazine, looking up between paragraphs to see what was going on in the air. Of course, these few

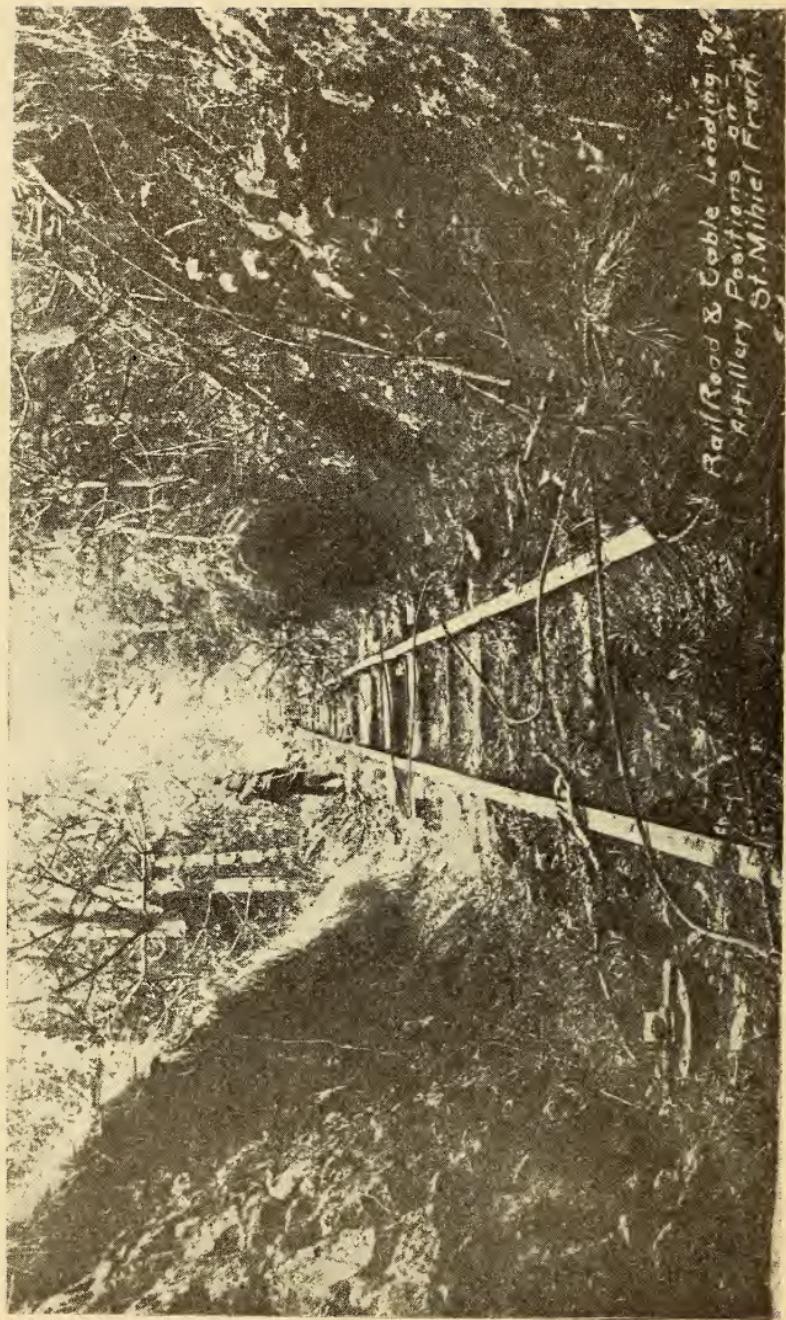


German Machine Gun Emplacements Shelled by Our Planes.

hours were mingled with the thought "I wonder how the Old Folks are at Home?"

One day on the outside of the woods we located a pigeon "barracks." There were about one hundred of the carriers "attached for rations and duty." It was guarded and kept by two Frenchmen, one of whom was a sergeant. One of our boys could speak French quite fluently so we asked every question imaginable. The Frenchman, seeing that we were interested, took great delight in explaining the values of the dove of "war." They said that some of the birds had flown five hundred kilometers in one day and that it was impossible to get them lost. It was about dinner time, in fact we had already eaten, and the birds were chattering among themselves with apparent impatience, as much as to say "I wish chow call would blow" or "why don't they start the line?" They were soon fed and they seemingly appreciated their bits of grain as well as we did our bully beef, hard tack, prunes and coffee.

The boys of the first and second battalions were having more excitement than we were. They had been gassed some and they usually



Railroad & Cables Leading to
Artillery Positions on
St. Michel Front

Railroad Cables Leading to Artillery Positions.

slept with their clothes on and their gas masks and helmets within easy reach. They were not living in dugouts, but they had some located for emergency. They would come back to headquarters with tales of how the whizz bangs would break up their chow lines, etc. They usually brought some ugly pieces of shrapnel as evidence. We soon had enough paper weights to last us to the end of time, at least to the end of the war.

Bois de Villers was now full of guns of all sizes. A small narrow gauge railroad switch ran into the woods and some guns were hauled in on it so large that one of them would cover two flat cars. There were also several "Treat 'Em Rough" tanks. The French would demonstrate their value to us by running over saplings which were oftentimes nine inches in diameter, jumping ditches, climbing over the stumps, etc. Nothing could stop one of the caterpillars. What they couldn't break down they could climb over.

The importance of all these large guns indicated to us that we were going to start something. Our suspicions were corroborated by the immense traffic that was going along the

roads outside the thicket. Ammunition by the ton was going to the front. Trucks, wagons and heavy artillery were rumbling over the roads day and night. We now began to hear authentic gossip that something would take place on Thursday, the 12th, and we expected to move soon.

On September 11th we got orders to move. We packed up and bade good-bye to the poilus, filled our canteens with "du vin rouge" and started on our way through the mud. We did not have far to go, only to Villers en Haye where Division Headquarters was located, not over three kilometers from the woods where we had been.

We found some old floorless wooden barracks. After finding our bunks we went to bed wondering when the drive would start. As the rain pattered down on the roof and sometimes through the old war-beaten barracks we soon went to sleep to be awakened by the commencement of one of the greatest battles in the history of the world.

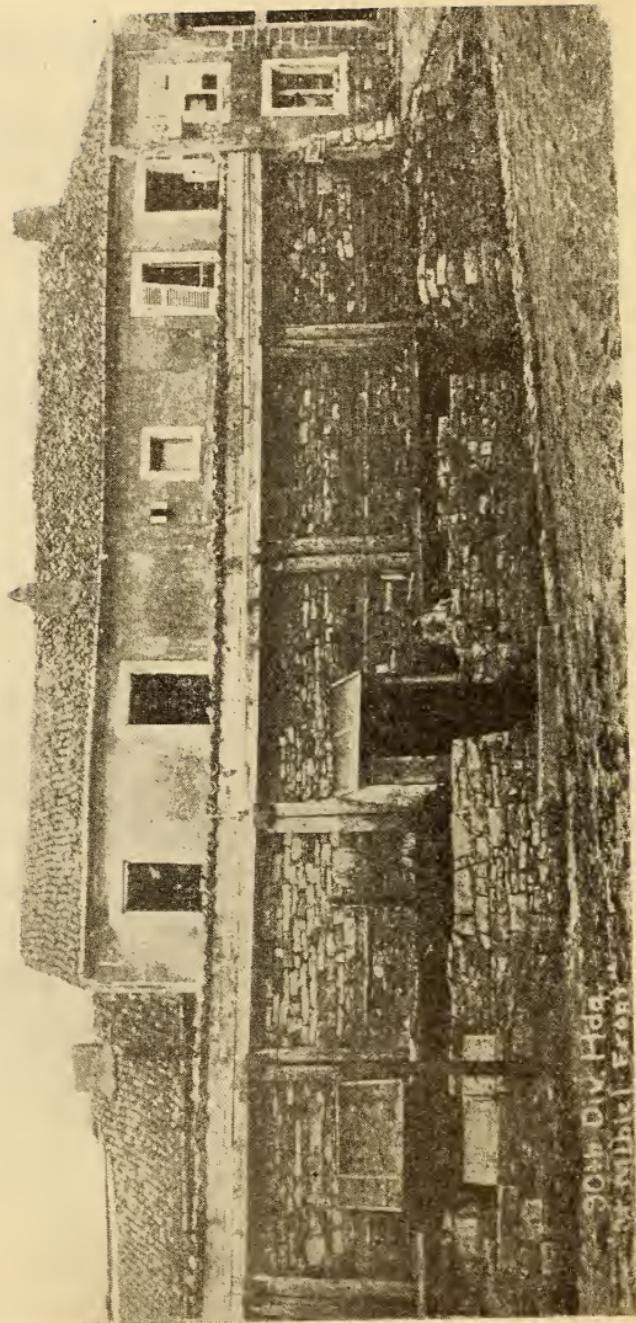
CHAPTER X.

ST. MIHIEL.

The battle had been carefully planned. The lines which had stood intact for over four years were going to be broken. It was generally understood by all that we were going to eliminate the "hernia," which extended as far down as St. Mihiel, so that the new line would run almost due west from Pagny-sur-Moselle.

Most of the organizations had orders to move as far up as possible the night before the Infantry was to go over the top and each was supposed to reach its new destination before the barrage started at 1 a. m. on the 12th. Our First Battalion moved from St. Jean into the vicinity of Mamey, spending a very miserable night standing in dugouts with their packs on, the water being too deep to permit their lying down. Our Second Battalion moved up from Jezainville northwestward. The Germans were shelling the vicinity of Montauville and several shells hit around the Battalion wagon, killing three of the mules and wounding the

Ninetieth Division Headquarters—St. Mihiel Front.



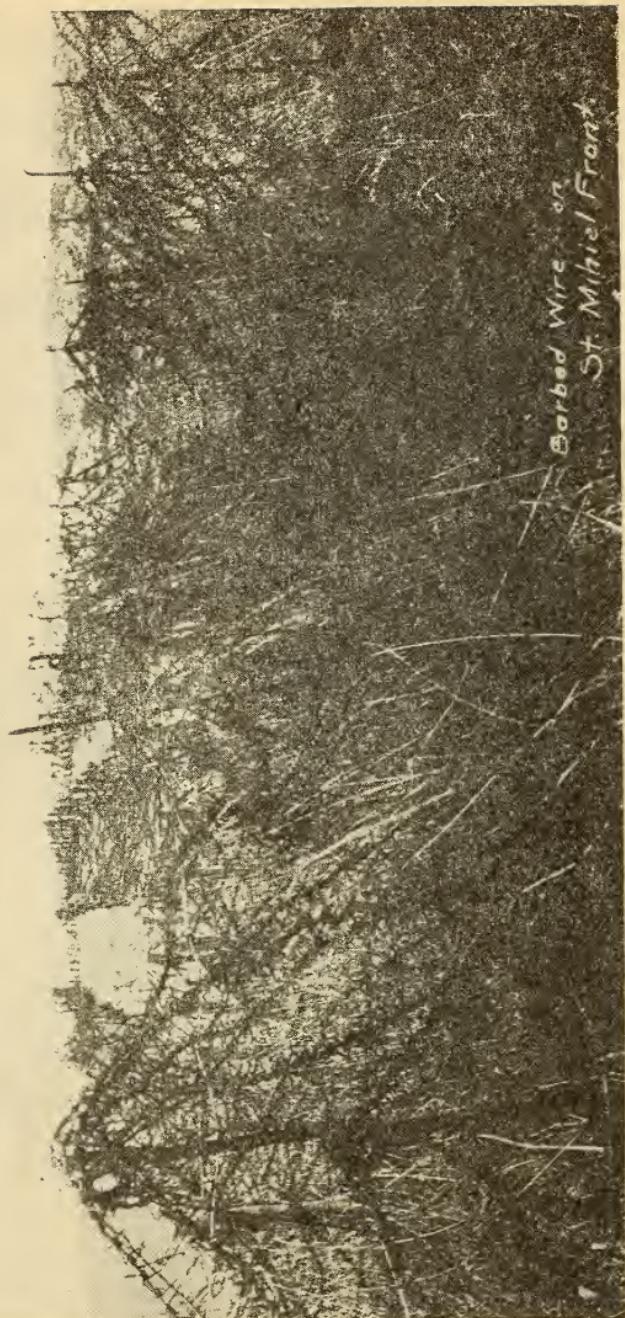
Dental lieutenant, who was on the seat with the driver. Unable to reach their destination the remainder of the night was spent in Montauville.

Our Division covered the lines from Pont-a-Mousson to St. Jean. Each organization in the front lines was to advance from 5 to 10 kilometers whenever they started. At five o'clock the boys were going over the top. Men and boys who one year before had come from the cotton fields, stores, offices, etc., entirely ignorant of the ways of warfare, were going to cross "No Man's Land" and come in personal contact with the enemy who was waiting for them, gun in hand and bayonet fixed.

At 1 a. m. the roaring of cannon awakened all who dared sleep. The earth quivered from the vibrations of the gigantic guns. The way was being cleared for the Infantry's advance. By 7:30 at Division Headquarters we had the news that our boys were pushing on and in some places had already gained their objectives for the day. About 8:30 a. m. a swarm of Boche prisoners were marched in.

According to military critics, never in the

*Barbed Wire on
St Mihiel Front*

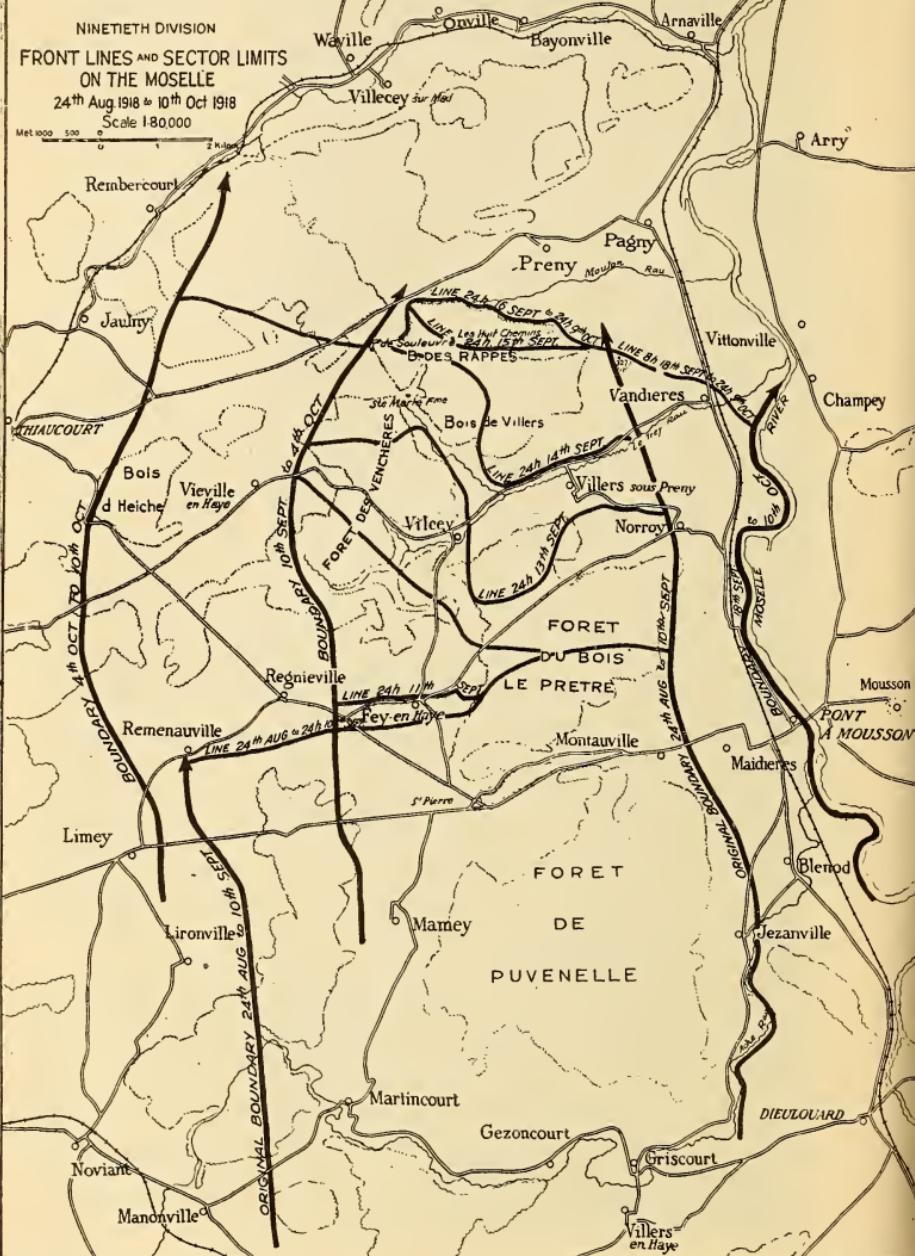


22 3

history of warfare has a battle been carried out so precisely as it was planned.

On September 12th the roads were a solid mass of traffic. Along the Metz Highway our heavy artillery batteries, that is the artillery supporting us, kept the passersby deafened by their awful roaring. The roads were strewn with the carnage of horses and mules, upturned trucks and ambulances, organizations moving forward and German prisoners. The well fortified trenches with their barbed wire entanglements were not enough to stop our doughboys. They swept on and on, destroying in 4 hours what the Germans had been building for four years. The little village of Fey-en-Haye which was on "No Man's Land" had eighty-seven houses before the drive. When our boys reached it, however, there was not a house left standing. Some of the walls were left, which our regiment later used for road material.

The bravery shown by our boys at Belleau Woods and Chateau Thierry could not excel that of divisions which participated in the big drive on Metz. The grit and perseverance of our boys was wonderful. One corporal came



PRINTED BY G-2-C THIRD ARMY

G-2 90th DIV

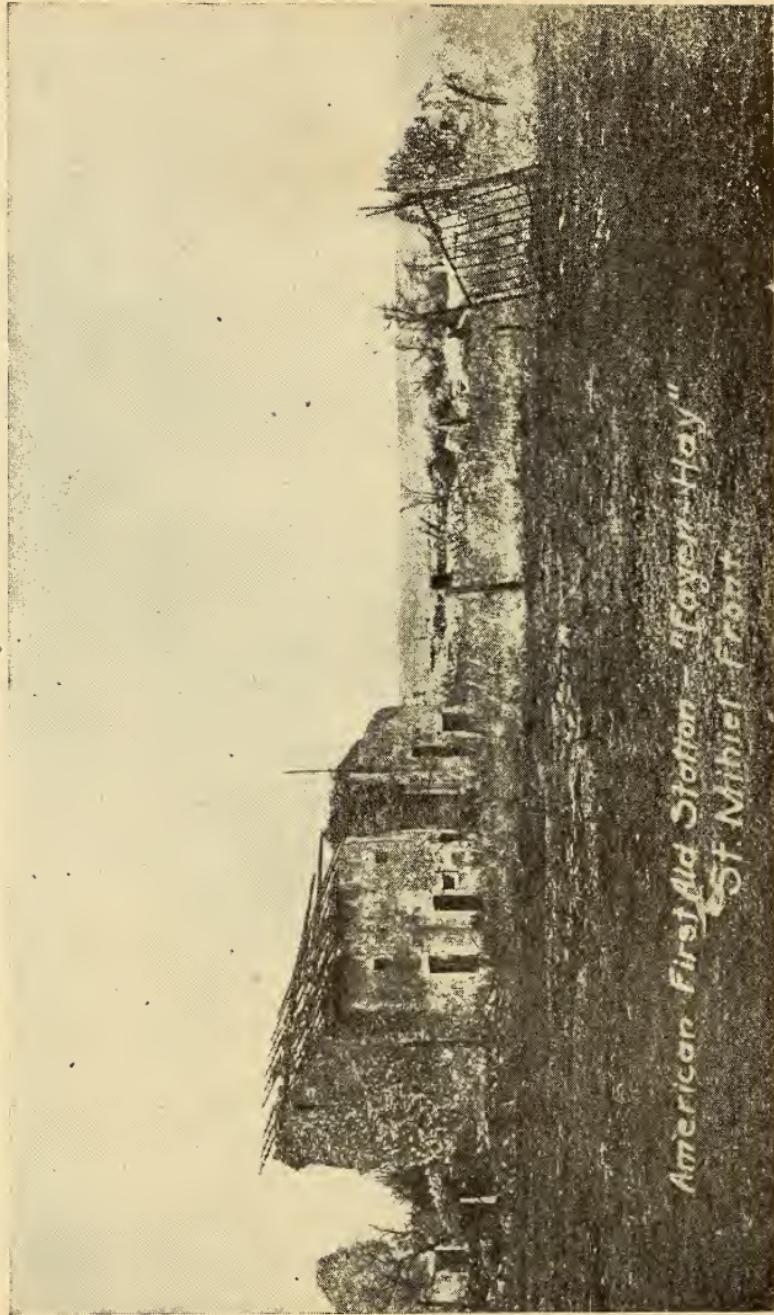
into our Division Headquarters with a score or more of German prisoners. He delivered them to the proper authorities and was so exhausted he lay down in an old barn to get some sleep. Two of our infirmary boys found him. He was wounded with a machine gun bullet. They immediately took him to an infirmary and administered treatment and also the injection of anti-tetanus serum to prevent lockjaw. He spent the night in the Field Hospital at Gris-court, only one kilometer away, and the next morning he was permitted to return to his organization at the front. The next night, Saturday, he was brought back to the hospital wounded again, but he had a smile on his face and said, "I got him all right, here's his pistol" as he displayed the Leuger of the dead German.

Ninety per cent of the wounded who were conscious expressed the desire to go back and finish their job. While the surgeons carefully dressed them they would smile and say, "Yes, he shot me, but I got him" or "I want to hurry and get patched up so I can go back and get him." The writer was reading a patient's identification tag and inquiring of his injuries. The wounded man said, "Yes, he hurt me pretty badly, but

I'm satisfied, I got my receipt for my three prisoners," whereupon he produced the document duly signed by the captain of the M. P.'s. These men from every walk of life were fighting side by side as soldiers, real soldiers, soldiers who won one of the decisive battles of the world's greatest war.

The wounded came through the field hospitals with their clothing torn to shreads, spattered with blood and mud and with their gas masks at the alert position which were oftentimes filled with pieces of shrapnel. The latter demonstrated that the mask was a good life preserver. Usually the wounded had had nothing to eat for the previous thirty-six hours or forty-eight hours, but they would console themselves and say "It's hell, but we whipped them all the way" or "A few more battles like this one and the Kaiser will have to give it up. I wish that he had been in front of us this morning."

Many of the boys made heroes of themselves by capturing machine gun nests which were as thick as flies in those woods. In some instances the Hun would yell "Kamerad," and throw up his hands. As the victor would approach the treacherous Boche would operate



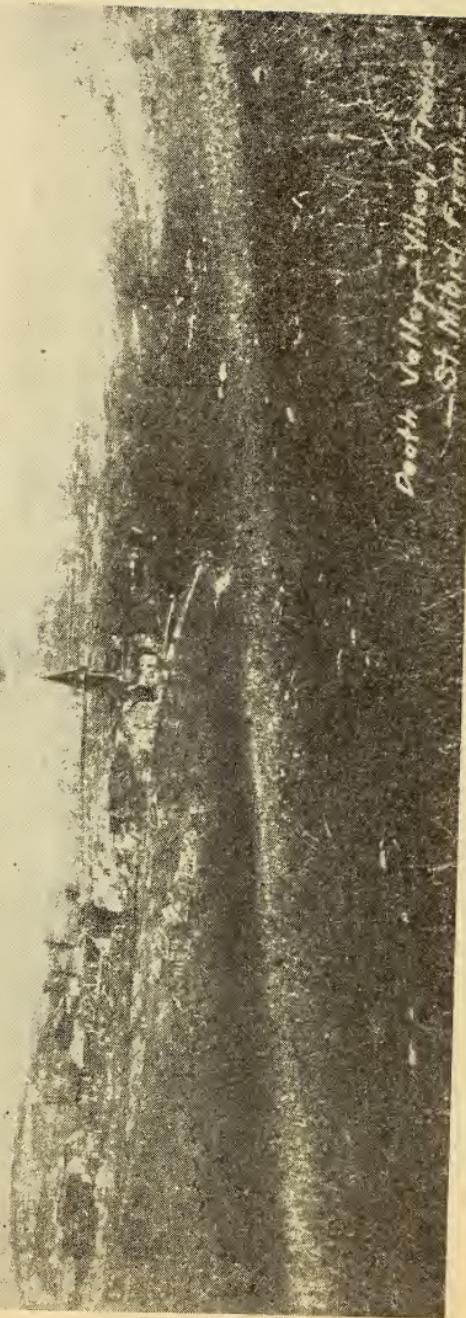
American First Aid Station -
Fay-en-Haye

American First Aid Station, Fay-en-Haye.

the machine gun with his feet. Our boys soon learned these tricks and were very cautious about taking prisoners. Many times the operators proved to be women. The Germans specialized on machine guns. They used them a great deal more than they did the ordinary rifle, as the former are such a great obstruction to going over the top. They are placed among the barbed wire entanglements near the vertex of a triangular open path which the aggressor will often take to avoid the wire. Thus our doughboys were confronted with a veritable stream of steel as the machine gun whizzed and whirred, shooting two hundred times per minute.

By noon on the 12th, everybody around Division Headquarters was elated over our victory. All the civilians in Villers-en-Haye would shout with joy and yell "La guerre finis tout de suite" as the Boche prisoners passed by. A few refugees from the liberated districts had relatives in the little village and they soon found a haven of rest there. Imagine their supreme joy after having been in absolute bondage for four years, working for the Ger-

*Death Valley - Vilcey, France.
— St. Michael's Church*



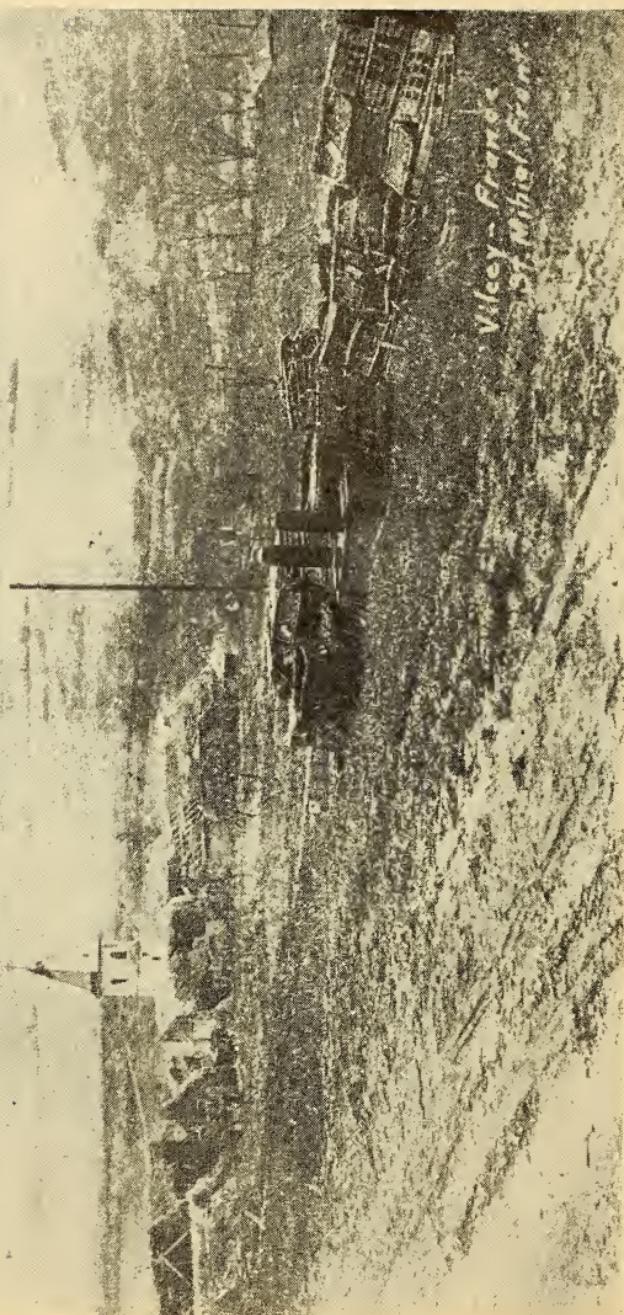
Death Valley, Vilcey, France.

man soldiers, living on scraps and being denied the usual freedom of everyday life.

The interpreters and clerks in the Military Police Office were about the busiest fellows on the top side of the globe, getting the necessary dope on the many Heines and Fritzes. The majority of the prisoners were apparently strong and healthy and wore good clothing; however, they munched the American white bread as if they were glad that they had fallen into the hands of a good enemy. Several of them were young boys which assured us that Germany's man power was fast nearing depletion. At the end of three days the number captured in the entire area exceeded 13,000. Many of the prisoners traded their helmets, caps, "Gott mit uns" belts, etc., for American tobacco and cigarettes. Souvenir getting became very popular. A few of the victims of Autocracy had marks and pfennigs which they gave for cigarettes and candy. The most valuable things, such as pistols and field glasses, had already been taken by the captors who justly deserved them.

On the afternoon of the 13th as we read the headlines in the Paris edition of the New York

Vilcey, France, Showing Destruction.



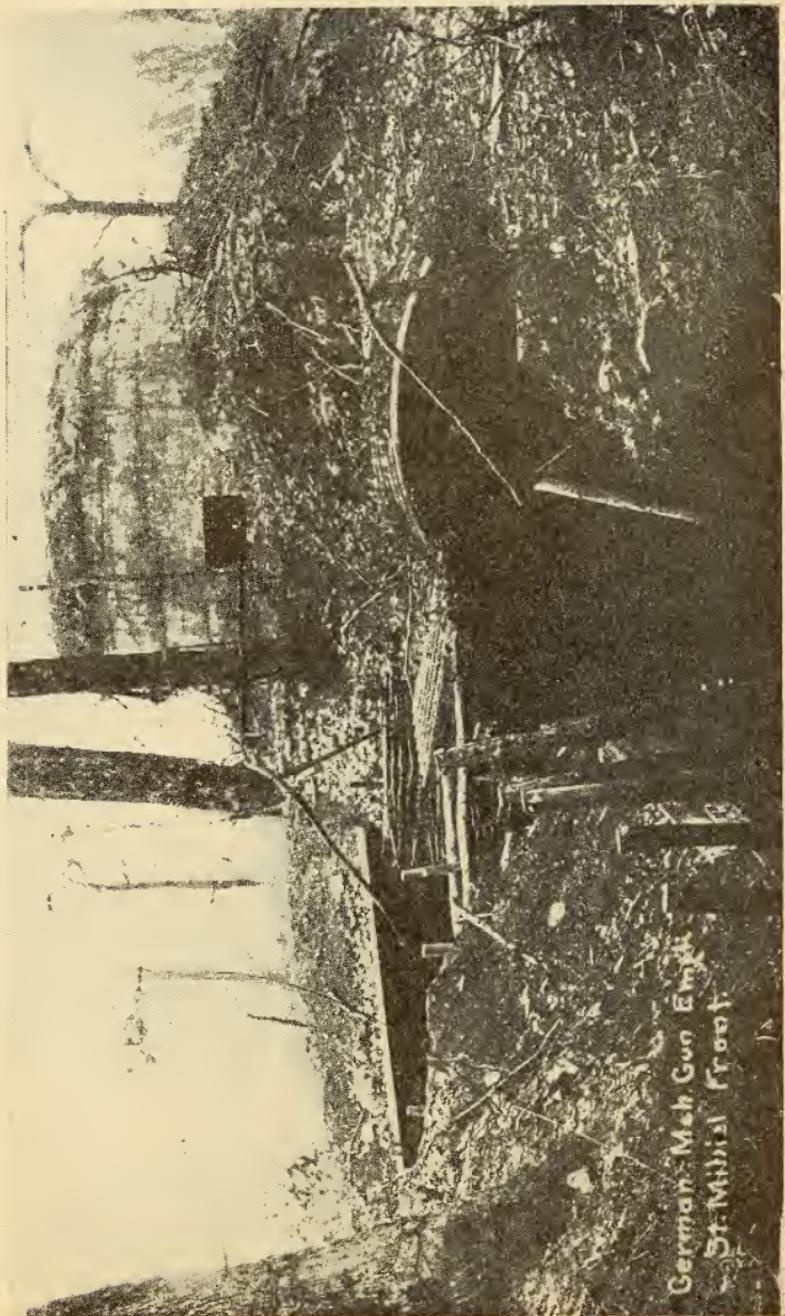
Herald we thought of the joy in the dear old United States as the folks at home read of what their boys had done. We captured vast stores of ammunition, food, etc., as well as horses, mules, wagons, kitchens, guns and cattle. Some of the companies had milk during the remainder of the time we spent on that front. Out of the booty our First Battalion Medical Detachment was furnished a Dutch wagon and a good span of mules, which they named "Can't" and "Won't," who rendered some very faithful service before peace was at last obtained. There was quite a lot of beer captured. Our Second Battalion captured a lot of beer, sauerkraut, pickles and jam near Pont-a-Mousson.

As soon as the enemy could get out of the way of our doughboys and dig in again they made some very stubborn counter attacks, which were very ably resisted; however, we lost some of our bravest men in holding the ground we had captured.

The chief work of our Engineers was to dig trenches, build roads, bridges, etc., and cut barbed wire in front of the infantry to make the way more clear for going over the top. Of

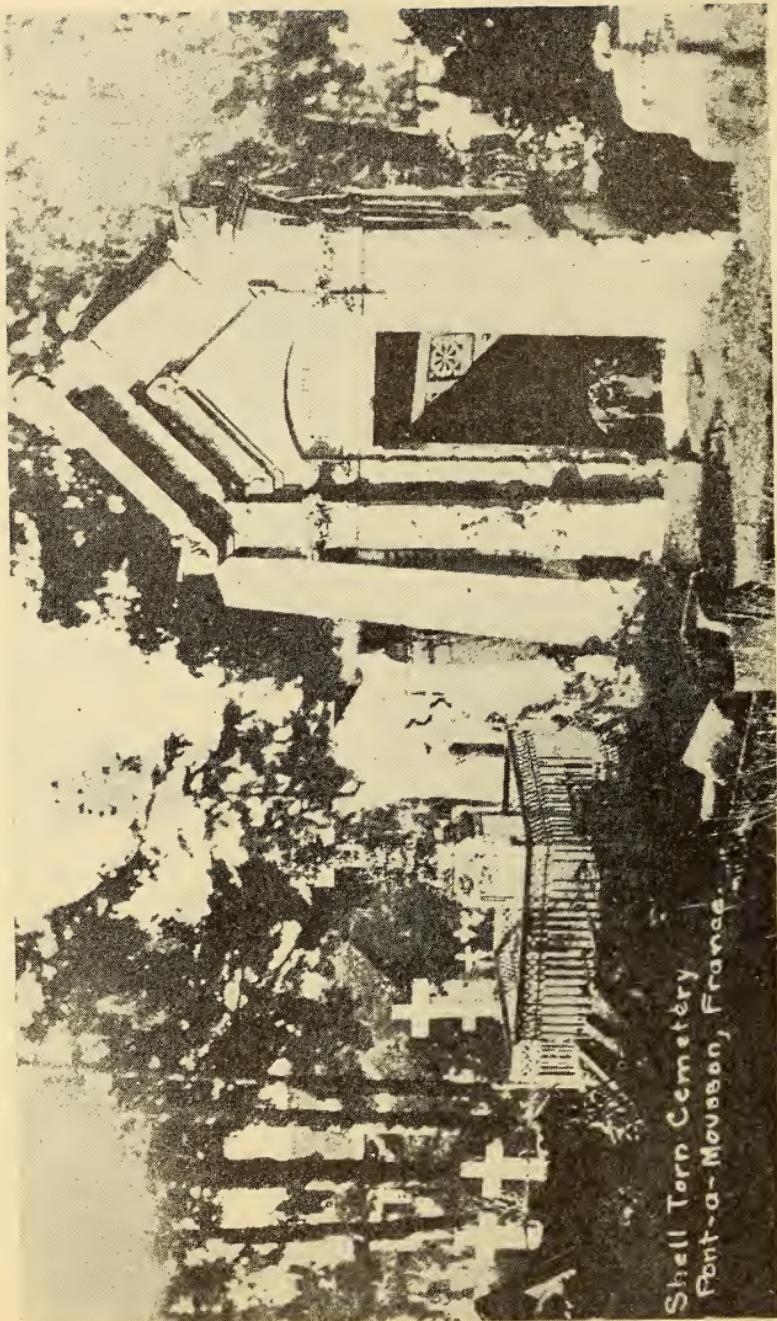
German Machine Gun Emplacements.

German Machine Gun Emplacement
St. Michael Front



course, most of this was done during the night-time, thus escaping the fire from the machine guns and snipers, unless detected. Ofttimes these night parties would walk over dead comrades along in "No Man's Land" and could hear the enemy talking. Technically, the Engineers were not supposed to go over the top except in case of emergency. In one of our companies some of the men had located an ammunition dump. They conceived the plan of slipping across the lines and blowing it up. Their scheme was suggested to the captain who approved it, whereupon a sergeant and five other men sneaked quietly over, performed the dangerous task, and immediately the explosion shook the earth. The men returned safely and won the praise of the entire company.

Saturday night, Sept. 14th, was one of the most miserable during the drive. Back in the hospitals streamed the wounded from every organization of the Division that was in the front lines. The enemy had launched some counter attacks during the day and in addition to that had done some desperate work with their artillery. In the vicinity of Faye-

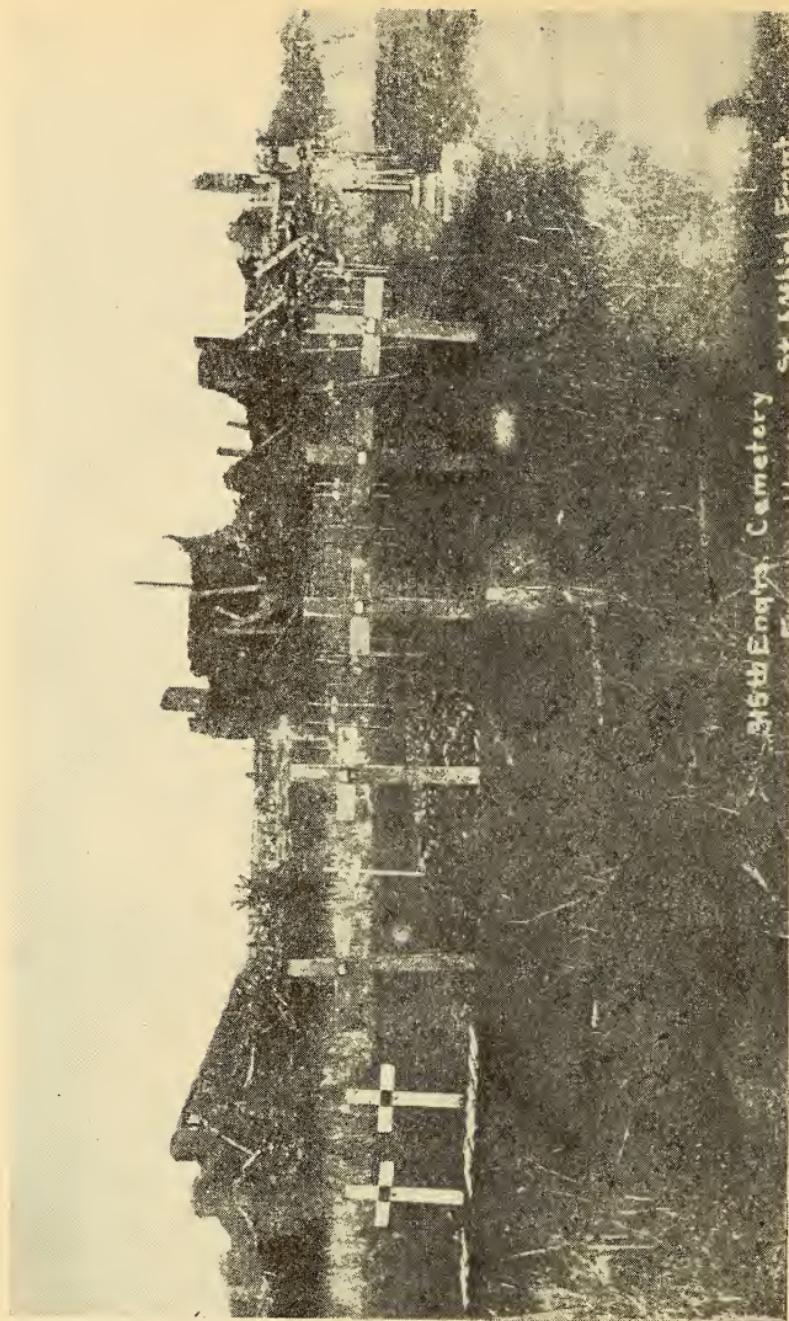


Shell Torn Cemetery
Pont-a-Mousson, France

Shell-torn Cemetery, Pont-a-Mousson.

en-Heye some of our engineers were building a road to connect with some of our new locations. Several of our artillery batteries were nearby. The roads were lined with infantry and machine gun battalions relieving those in the front lines or being relieved. It was a clear day and all of this activity could not escape Fritz's keen eye. The enemy had an observation balloon on the job, looking over the situation. It was soon learned that not all of the enemy's artillery had been captured or abandoned. The shells began to hit furiously among the great mass of men in the road. Several of the men of the various units were killed and wounded. "E" Company was the most unfortunate of our regiment. In fifteen minutes' time eight were killed and fifteen were wounded; however, the work went on. The road was soon completed and the moving infantry could go to their new trenches by a much shorter route. The building of this road was cited by some military engineering critics as being one of the greatest engineering feats ever accomplished under direct shell fire.

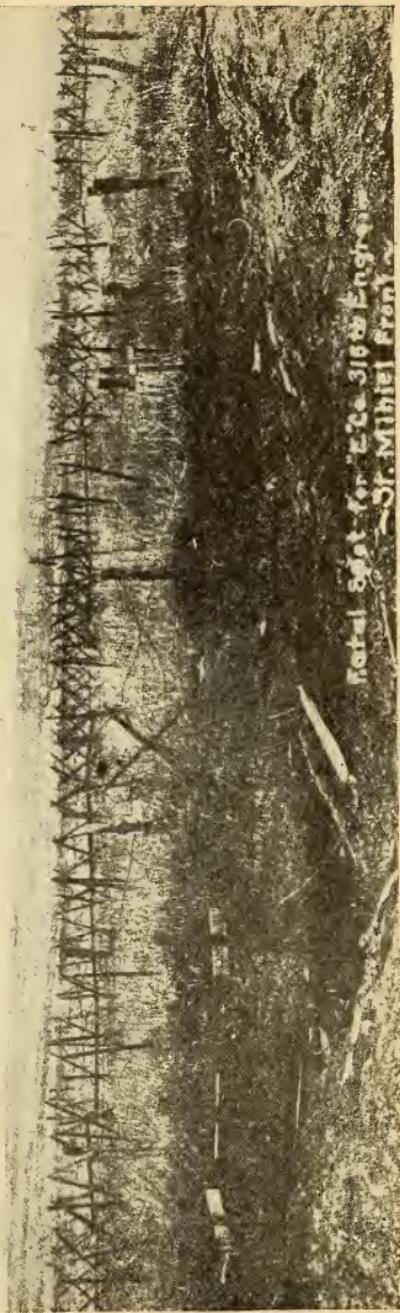
The remainder of our time on this front was spent in strengthening our lines by local skir-



mishes and sniper patrols. On one occasion some of the infantry were due to take certain objectives during the day. They started out and soon ran into the barrage from their own artillery. A message was sent back to raise the barrage as the men were being slaughtered like beeves. The artillery captain roughly replied that he had his objectives already calculated and to raise the range would necessitate a lot of work and that he would do no such thing. The messenger was not to be trifled with. He pulled out his gun and promptly shot the artillery captain. Papers found on the dead officer revealed the fact that he was a German spy.

One day one of our machine gun companies had orders to take a certain hill. They were met with furious resistance. When the remaining few reached the summit the officer in command sent a message back that he had captured hill number so and so, but he had no men to hold it. This illustrates the sacrifices our Division had to make to gain the glory it did.

All of the pride, insignia, and other distinctive characteristics of officers were forgotten



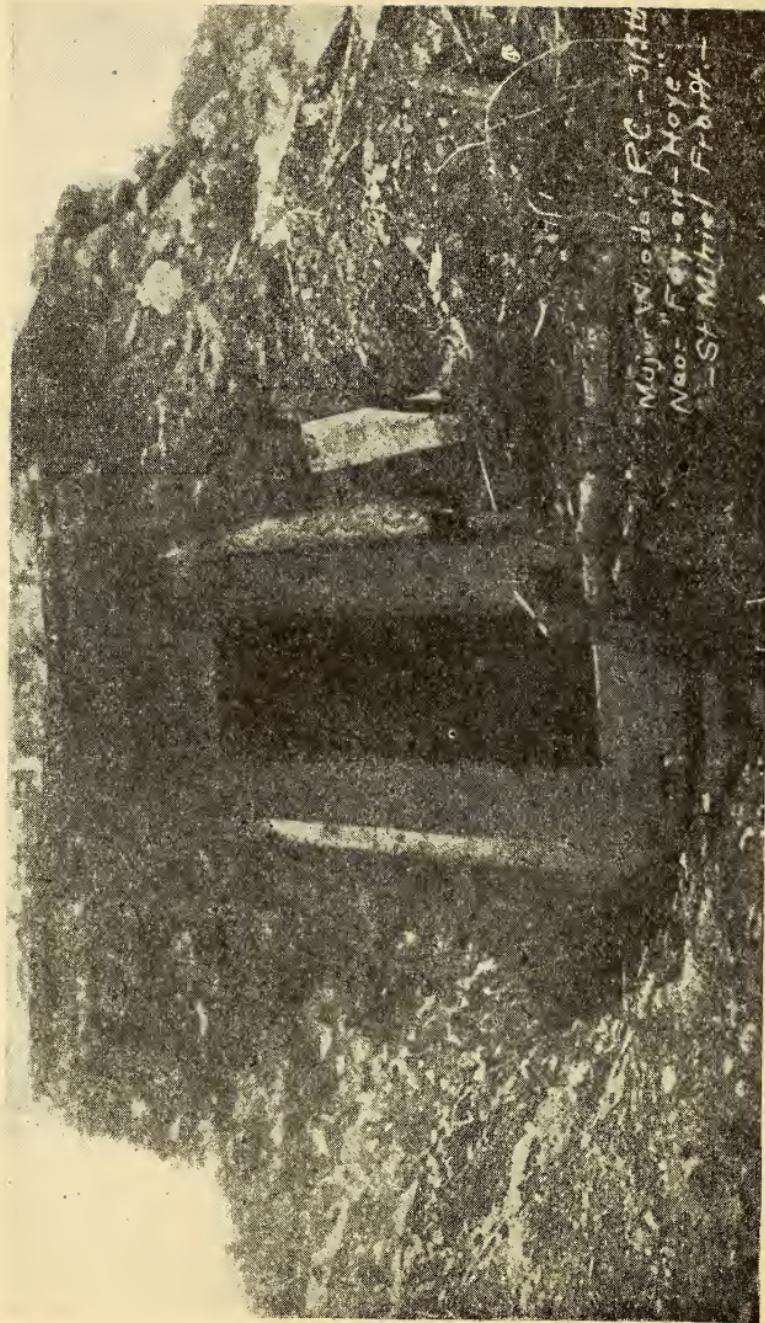
Fatal Spot for E Co. 315th Engineers
—Dr. Mihel Front

Fatal Spot for E Company, 315th Engineers.

during these desperate weeks of unimaginable horror. In fact the men were not supposed to salute the officers on the front because such might allow the enemy to locate some important officers. Neither did the officers wear their insignia. The first few days after the advance a doughboy major was being carried through the hospital. The attendant getting his pedigree, etc., asked "What rank are you, buddie? Private?" The wounded, though smiling major, replied, "No, I happen to be a major." The latter was chatting cheerfully with everyone as he was being dressed and when one private finished telling about having captured a lot of Dutch beer the major interrupted with, "We got some beer, too." The private realized that it was his own major talking to him.

On Sunday, the 15th, some of the 360th Infantry advanced about one kilometer up a hill without any artillery support. The chief losses, however, were gas casualties.

Quite a number of our men suffered from gas. One field hospital handled gas patients exclusively. The doctors had specialized in that work and 98% of the patients were saved,



Majer W. Woods - P.C. - 315th
Nao: "F. D. or - Noye -
- St. M. H. / F. D. or -

P. C., 2nd Bn., 315th Engineers. (Between Fay-en-Haye and Montauville.)

which was considered a remarkable success. The ambulance and truck drivers had anything but a pension on the front. No lights were allowed on the cars as such would make a good target for the vigilant enemy planes. The solid mass of big guns, tanks, ammunition wagons, kitchens, moving organizations on foot, usually a double line, coming and going over the muddy roads, made driving very difficult even in the daytime. Imagine all this heavy traffic on a pitch dark night, the road oftentimes full of shell holes, some big enough to swallow a wagon and team, no lights, the driver perhaps unacquainted with where the road was supposed to be. See him plunging ahead into the darkness with a load of ammunition likely to be exploded by a nearby bursting shell, or with a load of wounded men, some shot through the breast, others through the lungs, wheezing and groaning as their broken limbs were jostled and bumped with the jolts of the ambulance. Many of the patients, perhaps, were gassed and would shriek and gasp for breath, which was very annoying to the driver. Driving under such circumstances is evidently anything but a joy ride. It's a mir-

acle that no more cars were ditched than actually were.

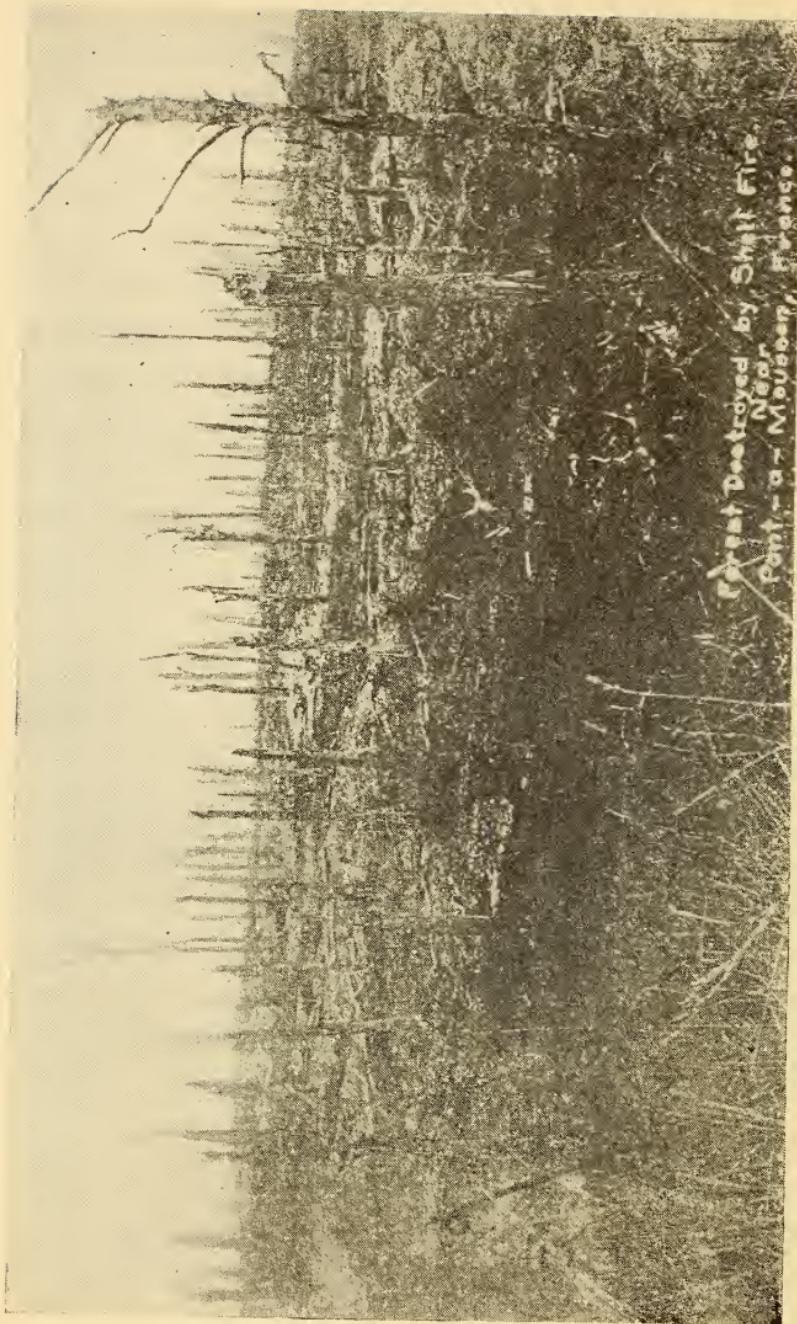
On September 21st, I was sent up to the Second Battalion P. C., which was located in a dugout about one mile northwest of Montauville, in support of the 359th and 360th Infantry which were in the vicinity of Vilcey and Norroy. Our First Battalion was then located near Fay-en Haye in support of the 357th and 358th Infantry Regiments. These locations were not changed so long as we stayed on the St. Mihiel front.

Some very interesting episodes revealed how well some of the men and officers liked to stay in their dugouts. A certain lieutenant would invariably bore us miserably with fool questions whenever he would hear any shells. "Is that Fritz's or ours?" "Little ones or big ones?" were the most common of his questions. One occasion this lieutenant went with a private to one of the neighboring companies. The distance was about one kilometer through woods which were strewn with our heavy artillery. On returning, the officer, in his haste, got off the path and started directly toward a large camouflaged gun, thinking that it was the

shack occupied by the officers' mess, his guide told him that that was some artillery. About that time the great gun belched forth its mighty burden of destruction as the earth shook. The lieutenant "About-faced" and said "Ah, that isn't the way home." After rambling around in the woods for about thirty minutes he at last found his way back to the dugout.

All of the men did not have dugouts. Many of them had to sleep in pup tents. One night some shells hit the vicinity of the kitchen where some of the men were sleeping. One of the men imagined that he was seriously wounded, he ran down to the Battalion Aid Station, which was in the dugout with the P. C., and waked up one of the medical boys yelling, "Here, hurry up and dress my wound." Rubbing his eyes and getting up from his blankets on the floor the attendant asked "Where are you wounded?" The man replied, "Up here, I think. Can't you see the blood?" as he indicated the side of his head. Upon close examination no wound could be found, of which he was finally convinced.

Neither tongue nor pen can picture the description of "No Man's Land" as we found it.



Forest Destroyed by Shell Fire
Near Point-aux-Meules, Quebec.

Forest Destroyed by Shell Fire,

Trees were battered to the ground. There were shell holes of all sizes. Trenches ran in every direction strewn with hand grenades, etc. Old guns, shells—some of which had failed to explode—dismantled machine guns with long tapes of unused ammunition, skeletons and never-ending masses of barbed wire covered the wrecked terrain. Some fellow remarked, "I don't see what we fought so hard over this dern mess for."

After the St. Mihiel salient was wiped out the citadels and spires of Metz were plainly before our eyes and within easy range of our guns. Marshal Foch had assured us that our victorious Stars and Stripes would float in Metz ere long. Had it not been for what happened in Metz one hundred and forty-two years before we might not have been fighting side by side with the French in the great world war. It was there that La Fayette received the news of America's Declaration of Independence and the consequent revolution. He thereupon resolved to come to our relief and by his faithful military assistance he helped to mold the destiny of young America and thus was con-

tracted the debt of which the Texas-Oklahoma boys helped to pay their share.

Just after our great victory, the news was flashed that Austria had sued for peace. We crowded the "Y's" for papers. Everything was hilarious. Bets were made, pro and con, that peace would be signed within a few days as the papers would bring in daily reports of the great gains by our allies in the north. The Kaiser soon made a denial of having promulgated the Austrian peace note, adding that the evacuation of St. Mihiel was prearranged, etc., and that his glorious armies were winning daily victories and would soon conquer. However, within six weeks from then the criminal monarch was seeking sweet refuge in Holland.

The boys who had done their part so nobly now began to get some muchly needed rest. Companies and battalions were relieved for a few days at a time and taken back to the delouser to get cleaned up. The delouser was well equipped and could bathe forty men in fifteen minutes. The water was heated and there was plenty of soap. The men were allowed five minutes to undress; five minutes under the showers and five minutes to dress.

All were given a thorough cleansing and separated from the cooties. New outer garments, also, were given to those who needed them, which was usually all. These baths were very greatly needed. Some of the boys had not taken off their clothing for two weeks. They had slept, or at least tried to sleep, with their shoes on.

Most of the German dugouts which we now occupied contained squads and platoons of trench rats, and some of the hungriest fleas one ever saw. Cooties were in abundance. Some fellow suggested that perhaps some of the good old warriors of old had had them, since the Bible refers to the "pest that walketh in the darkness." It was no uncommon sight to see some fellow reading his shirt. He had read about such some months before, but now he knew what it meant. The parody on "They go wild, simply wild over me" made a big hit with all the doughboys because there was never anything more true. It is a universal joke now that the boys in the A. E. F. understand why Napoleon had his portrait made with his hand inside his coat.

Sleeping with cooties, fleas and rats, with our clothes on and in the mud was not all that

we boys had to contend with. We had to wear our gas masks and helmets all the time and sometimes sleep with them on. We were forbidden to have any lights after dark. We were in danger from artillery shells and aeroplanes as well as gas. We were constantly disturbed by the low flying planes which were equipped with machine guns. A woodchuck never could learn to clatter as fast as these machine guns. Our food consisted of corned beef, hard tack, camouflaged pudding and coffee for several days at a time. This was merely the everyday life on the front and the periods during which we made our advances were a great deal worse, as has already been referred to. Think of these conditions if you were not in the A. E. F. and ask yourself if we did not earn our trip to France and Germany. Did you complain because you had to buy a few Liberty Bonds or War Saving Stamps? Did you think that you were fighting a hard war because you made a few contributions to the Y. M. C. A., Red Cross and the other welfare organizations which perhaps deprived you of a few cigars, shows, ice cream sodas, etc.? Wasn't it awful to have to have meatless and

wheatless days? Or did you think that you were doing some real soldiering when you were doing four or six hours per day drilling in the training camps back in the States, having good fair eats and good warm, comfortable barracks for your home, with the privilege of visiting the nearby city twice each week?

On September 26th the great Meuse-Argonne offensive in which we were to play an important part later on, was scheduled to begin. In connection with the great drive farther west, our infantry was to make a slight local advance and strengthen its lines. About twenty-five engineers from "E" company were detailed to cut wire for the infantry ahead. The orders being somewhat confused the wire was already cut when the engineers arrived so they all went over the top together. The enemy's machine guns were on the job and we lost heavily. Several of our engineers were wounded and others were missing. One of our lieutenants was severely wounded, losing one of his eyes and almost losing the other one. One of the sergeants in "E" company was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for bravery shown in that little skirmish.

Souvenir hunting became more popular after we had liberated so much territory and captured so much booty and prisoners. Pistols, flashlights, helmets, bayonets, field glasses, etc., were the most common. All the old dug-outs along our new positions were ransacked from end to end and from top to bottom. In some instances boys were killed or wounded by stray shells while souvenir hunting.

Something of interest occurred almost every day, which kept gossip in circulation. There was a great deal of aerial activity. Sometimes sharp battles between planes and sometimes enemy planes trying to bring down our observation balloons. The anti-aircraft guns shooting at the planes or balloons created plenty of excitement. The falling fragments from these were as dangerous as the machine gun equipped planes themselves. Reconnaissance planes were on the job daily. Whenever any plane could be seen someone would give the command "Get under cover," because we were never certain that it was not an enemy plane at first sight, and whether it was equipped with bombs, machine guns or observation apparatus we did not want to be seen.

There was artillery shelling daily, which often broke up chow lines, as well as pup tents and billets. Those organizations billeted in small villages who did not have dugouts suffered a few casualties from the artillery as well as the bombing planes. Many of the rotating bands of the enemy's shells were merely plated, instead of being of solid copper, which indicated the scarcity of that material. Also, quite a number contained no explosives which were termed "duds." It was a great consolation to see that a shell which had hit near you was a dud. One day an ambulance dressing station was being shelled. Several ambulances were parked on the outside. One large shell hit directly under one of the ambulances while the boys dodged and ducked. They were delighted to find that it was a dud.

There was a Bohemian in our bunch whose English was very broken. He was well liked by all the hoys and we had lots of fun teasing him about his dialect. He and another boy occupied a good deep dugout, formerly occupied by the Germans. One day about chow time a heavy shelling was going on outside and they were discussing the advisability of

going to their meal. The other boy thought that the dugout was better. The Bohemian, peeping out of the door, saw a shell hit, which, to his great delight, failed to explode. He yelled back to his partner, "Ah, come on out, it's a 'spud.' "

These duds were used extensively by the enemy. Of course, they were harmless unless the whole shell hit something, but they served their purpose to create consternation and despair as they sang their melancholy song through the air. It was economy for the Germans to send over a few powerless shells, however, the fact was established that one reason for so many duds was that several of the allied prisoners were working in the munitions plants. Some of our men claim to have found notes in some of the shells written by American prisoners at Metz.

Nothing is more despairing than to be under heavy artillery fire. On their way to their victims these shells have a sharp, shrill whistle, playing every note on both sides of the G clef, except the merry ones. It causes a subconscious, melancholic state of feeling of anyone within their hearing. They leave nothing but frag-

ments and splinters of whatever they hit, whether it be men, horses, wagons, trucks, ambulances, kitchens, tents, houses, roads, railroads, bridges, trees or whatnot. In "No Man's Land" I've seen shell holes big enough to hold an ordinary wagon and team, and also trees twenty inches in diameter cut squarely in two. Numerous times company, battalion, and even regimental post commands have been temporarily established in large shell holes. The high explosive shells were termed "G. I." cans because their size corresponded to our galvanized iron garbage cans.

There were many deeds of heroism during the St. Mihiel drive, often unexpected. In one instance there was a private who cared not a whit for snappy drill and other military maneuvers. In fact it was all detestable to him. He was very awkward in drilling and was usually found with a dirty rifle. He was so unmilitary in handling the rifle that he had been placed on K. P. for several weeks preceding the big drive. However, he knew more about how to kill Huns than his company commander thought. When the time came to go over the top this private supplied himself with all the

hand grenades he could carry and started out. He quietly slipped upon a bunch of Germans, threw the grenades among them, killed two and caused the others to rush toward him with hands raised, yelling "Kamerad." As he marched to the P. C. with his five prisoners his captain praised him highly and realized that one did not have to be perfect in the manual of arms to do his bit on the front.

The maxim "A miss is as good as a mile" was very applicable to the miracles which happened almost every day. One night a corporal and a sergeant were sleeping in a small shell hole during a heavy shelling. A large piece of shrapnel hit the sergeant, killing him instantly, while the corporal was unhurt.

It was during our last days on the St. Mihiel front that the Allies were gaining the great victories in the East. The news got better every day. Every messenger was bored to death by us, anxious trench-worn boys, trying to learn what the latest dope was. "Has Bulgaria surrendered yet?" was the chief question for a few days. We would crowd and scramble for a glimpse at the paper which was usually posted at the kitchen. Then the news would pass down the chow line: "And Tur-

key has surrendered too." "Is that so? Where did you get that?" one would ask. "A truck driver told me that the colonel's chauffeur told him that he was at Division Headquarters and heard one of the orderlies say that one of the officers said that it was straight stuff." "That's fine. Now if Germany will surrender." Perhaps the latter remark was scarcely audible down near the end of the line and some fellow who only caught part of the words would ask "What's that? Did he say that Germany has surrendered?" "No, not yet," someone would reply, "but a friend of mine said that his lieutenant said that he didn't think that the Kaiser could hold out much longer." This is merely an example of how authentic many of the circulating rumors were.

In a few days it was well established, officially, that Bulgaria had surrendered and that Germany had asked for an armistice. The latter was generally known among our Division on Sunday, October 6th, and all ears were seemingly listening for Lansing's reply.

The reply did not come so promptly, which indicated that the great statesman at Washington was giving the proposition very careful consider-

ation. The writer with two companies of engineers and the 3rd Battalion of the 359th Infantry was at the delousing station at Gris-court, near Division Headquarters. The two organizations being together, several old friends met. The Y canteen and the Division Commissary had ample supplies and with the good piano at the recreation room a reunion was enjoyed. All of this combination with the prospect of an early peace caused a general good feeling. This was ameliorated by the fact that the big Liberty Loan drive which had just been launched in the States had gone over the top and we knew that the folks back home were behind us.

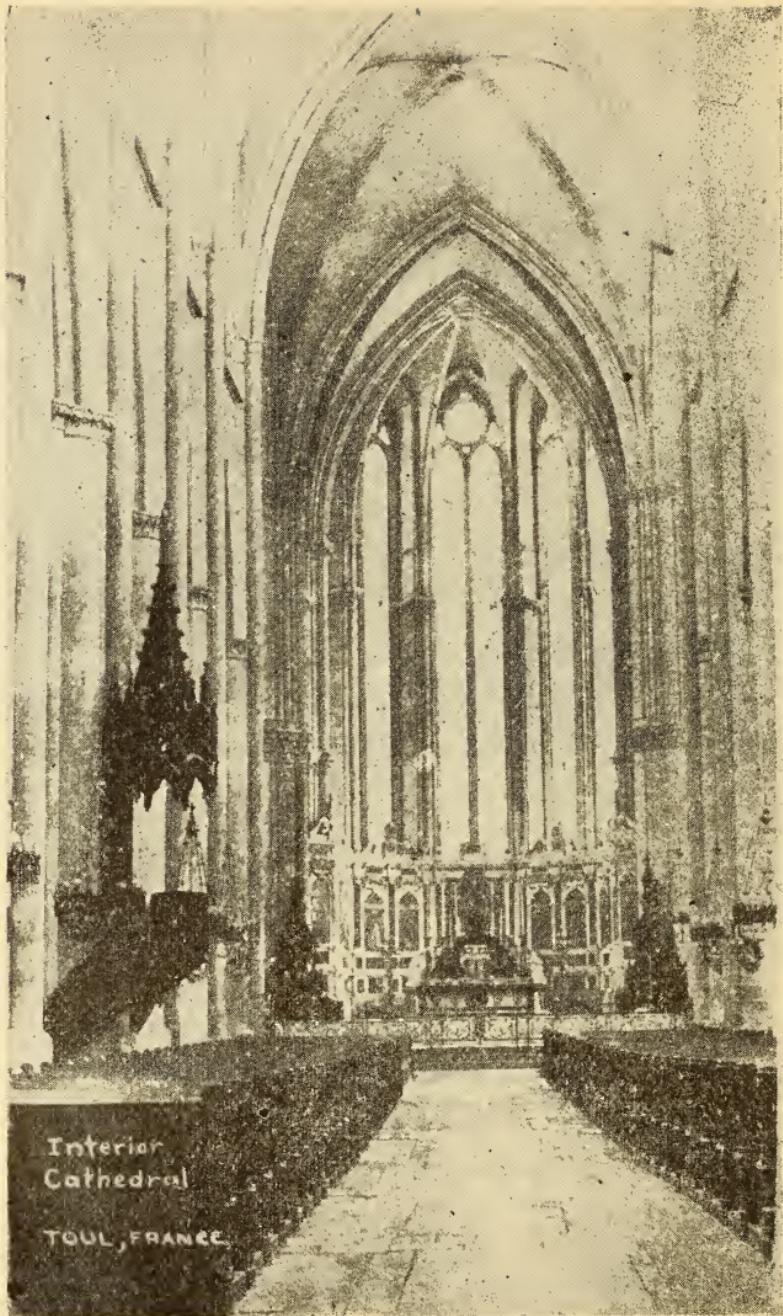
CHAPTER XI.

RELIEF.

Within a few days we received orders that we were being relieved by the Fifth Division. All of us who were at the delouser got orders to hurry back to our quarters at the front and get our junk together in order to move. Simultaneously we got the news that the Kaiser's proposal for an armistice had been flatly refused. However, we all went back toward the front determined that the time would soon come when Germany would surrender.

We made our way back to the front and only remained over night before making our departure. We were happy that we were being relieved. We had been at the front for about seven weeks and we were as cheerful as a lot of children on the last day of school as we rolled our packs, in spite of the fact that we knew that we would have to hike.

Yes, we had to hike and it was some hike, too. My crowd left the vicinity of Montauville at dark on Wednesday, October 9th, and marched all night long, covering about thirty-



Interior
Cathedral

TOUL, FRANCE.

Interior of Cathedral, Toul, France.

five kilometers. About daylight the next morning we arrived in a little village called Lucy, just west of Toul. We carried light packs, the wagons hauling our supplies. It was a cold night and several of the teamsters declared that they had rather walk than ride. Some of the footsmen changed with them occasionally. Of three hundred men in our two companies not one fell out. The usual Yankee grit and endurance was noticeable. I noticed one poor fellow with swollen feet who was limping along in his sock feet carrying his shoes. He went all the way, too.

It may seem preposterous that anyone could sleep on the hard pavement with only one blanket, but the writer and another comrade actually did, as soon as we reached our destination, and got one hour's sleep, such as it was.

All of our regiment were together at Lucy. The First Battalion had not made the entire trip from the front in one night as we had, but they were tired out just the same. All of the Division were in the Toul vicinity and remained there until the departure for the Meuse-Argonne front.

We enjoyed a good rest during our short stay

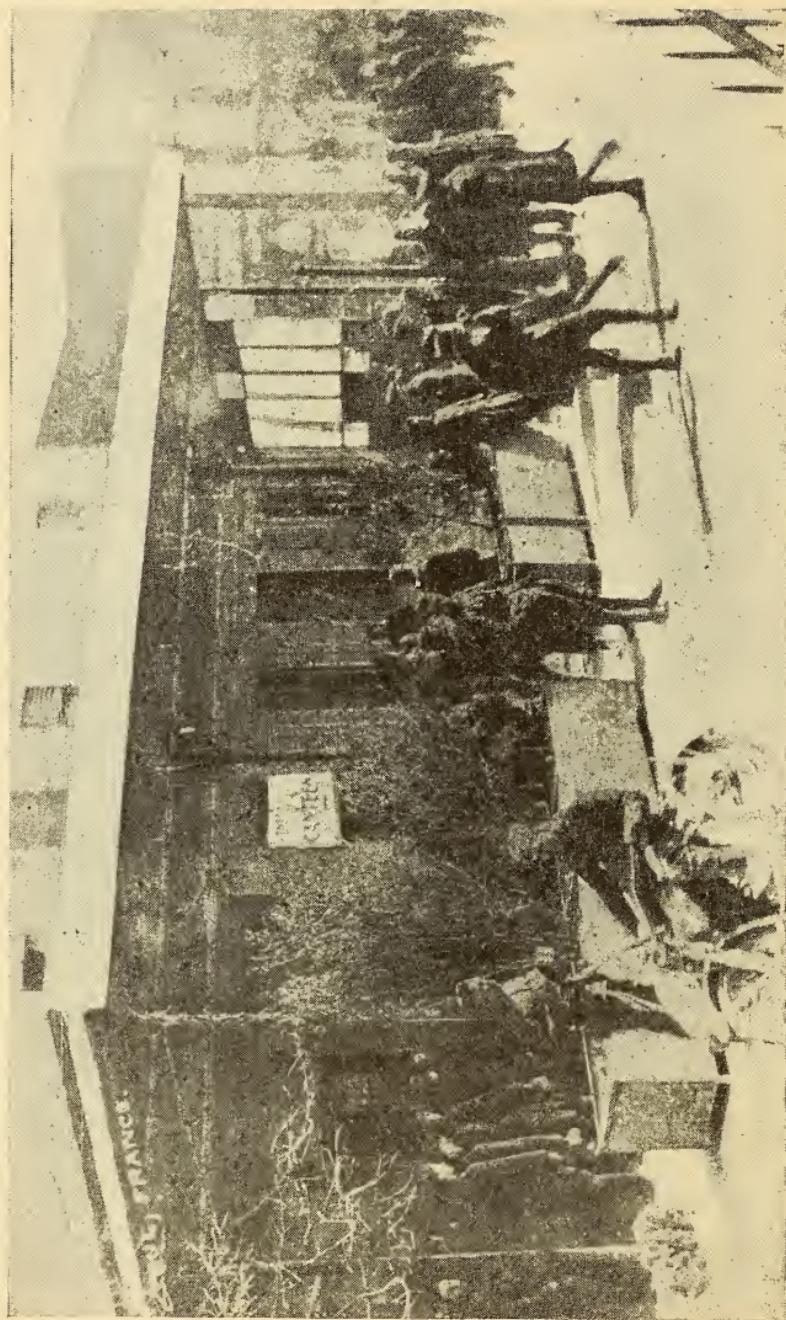
at Lucy. At the canteen there were abundant provisions and we had plenty of good eats for a change. That was a great wine growing country and the hills were covered with grapes which were now ripe and juicy. The Frenchmen were harvesting them and we had no trouble in getting all we wanted to eat. At our kitchens we had good hot cakes, butter, jam and fresh meat. We also got more baths. Quite a few A. W. O. L.'s were recorded. Many of us slipped off and went to Toul. No passes were being issued but "We should worry." We had been on the front and had suffered many hardships and we thought that we ought to be allowed to go wheresoever we pleased. The M. P.'s would stop us at the gate, but that didn't worry us. It was an easy matter to find the long plank which ran up to the top of the wall at an incline of about 45 degrees. The plank was very slick from previous use, but we climbed it without any great difficulty. On the inside of town we were unmolested. We found a good Y. M. C. A. canteen which was serving honest to goodness fried eggs, mince pies, and hot chocolate. The only fault we could find with that Y was that it should have furnished us a better access to town.

During this short rest period the usual army gossip was indulged in extensively. Some said that we were going back to Havre to build docks. Others said that we would go to Southampton for a similar purpose. Others got the news that we were going to Flanders, up where they had to swim in mud. Many seemed to think that because of our good success at St. Mihiel front that our part of going over the top was through with.

Along with the gossip came the news that Germany had accepted President Wilson's fourteen points. It was emphasized by big headlines in the Paris Edition of the New York Herald. We read the news with more excitement than was really manifested when we finally received the correct news on November 11th.

On the 16th we bade farewell to our billets in Lucy and slung on our packs for a move. Fortunately, we did not have to hike. We were conveyed in trucks operated by the Indo-Chinese for the French Government. These were the first creatures we had seen who had no language. They merely had a grunt. Just before our departure, their sergeant, I suppose it was, lined them up, presumptively for roll call; after each one had grunted they scattered out just as if they

By Going A. W. O. L. We Found Some Good Eats in Toul.



had been dismissed. Then they filled their mouths full of snuff or something, crawled upon their respective trucks and we were soon on our way.

We passed through Pagny-sur-Meuse, St. Mihiel, Commercy and within seven kilometers of Verdun. We arrived at our destination, that is, where they unloaded us, about one hour after dark. We were in a little village when we "de-trucked" and we naturally thought that we would be billeted there. We soon found out differently. We started off down the road, which was almost knee deep in real thin slushy mud, and on and on we waded. We passed two other little villages and began to wonder if we really had any destination. No one seemed to know where we were going. We were so tired that we would try to fall out to rest, but there was no place to fall. Everything was covered with mud. Occasionally an overcoat or slicker would fall into the mud and as someone picked it up would get the mud all over him. Pretty soon the trucks which we had unloaded from passed us, going in the same direction. This aroused our anger. We could not understand why they did not convey us nearer our destination. There was a barrage of oaths sent out, describing the various faults of France

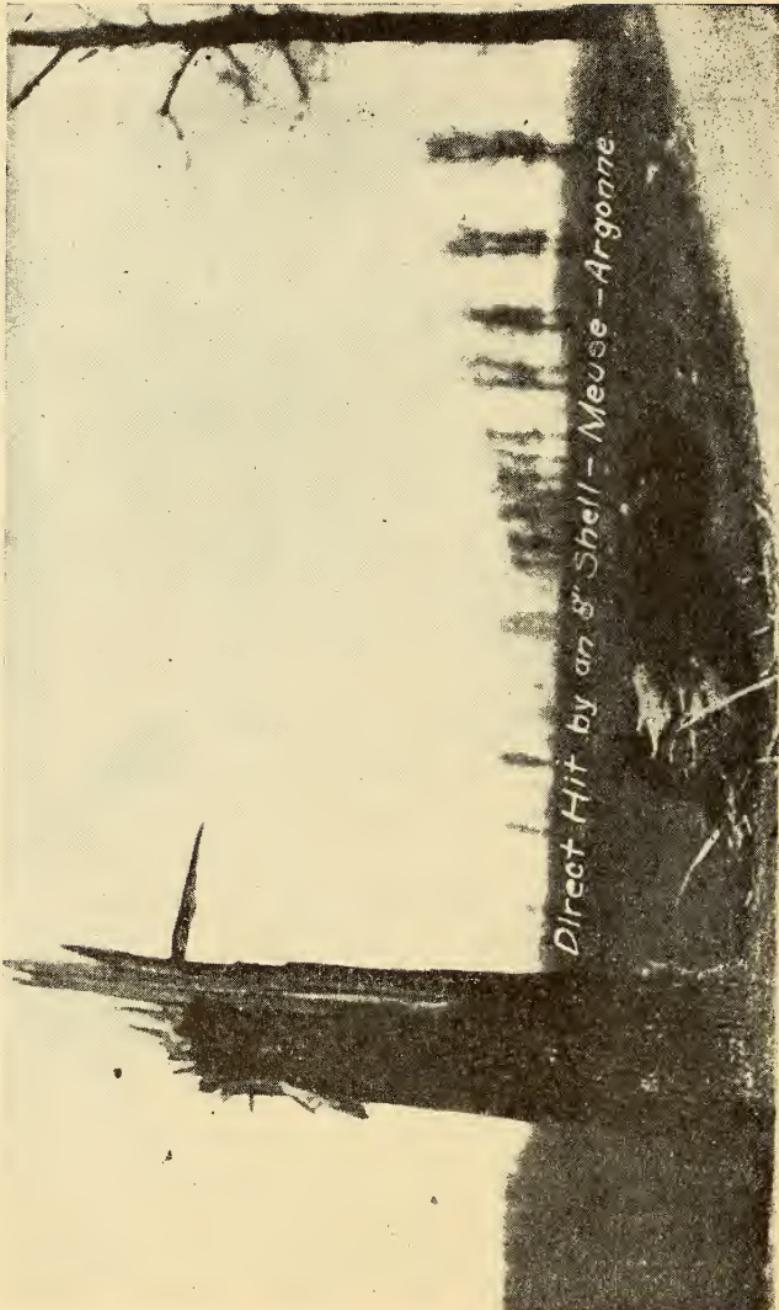
and the French. One fellow said that France was the sorriest country in the world and he supposed that we were really fighting the Germans because they had not taken the darned country long ago. Another suggested that our debt to France was already paid, and that we should go back to the "States" "tout de suite." As the mud got deeper another said that the guy that called France "sunny" was the biggest chump in the world and he described him with every adjective in the dictionary of profanity. Finally we reached a hill, an incline of about twenty-five degrees. A few packs were salvaged along the roadside. Whether or not the owners reclaimed them the next morning I'm unable to say. Some threatened to sleep in the rain, but we kept going until we found some old barracks and about midnight we lay down to get some muchly needed rest.

We were now at Camp Sud. The next day was spent in cleaning barracks, as usual, and changing orders. About dark the Second Battalion P. C., with "D" and "F" Companies, got orders to move up. With light packs we left the frog pond about 8 p. m. and marched back through some of the same mud going toward the front. As the roar and flash of the large guns became

more distinct we realized that we were on the right road. We passed through Esnes, Montzeville and a few more places that had been villages, but now consisted of the ruins of the old stone buildings. We were now on the old battle field which had seen such awful fighting in 1916 when Marshal Foch had said, "They shall not pass." The territory had been only recently taken from the enemy.

About 3 a. m. we reached our destination, which was just south of Bethincourt which had been in the hands of the Germans only two weeks before, but the lines had now been pushed up considerably so that even field hospitals were located near us. The ground was covered with frost and each of us had only two blankets. We were told to find us a place on the shell torn hill and get some rest, which we did. It was as cold as the very mischief, but we slept some anyhow. The next morning I found a German skeleton about six feet from my bunk. He had not been killed in the recent advance, because he had long since decayed. Evidently, he was one of the 200,000 victims of 1916. His boots were still on the skeleton of his feet.

There was plenty for us to do along the side



Direct Hit by an 8" Shell - Meuse-Argonne.

Direct Hit by an 8-inch Shell, Meuse-Argonne.

of this desolate hill. There were two field hospitals there and the roads needed all the repairing we could do. Along the shell torn roads passed platoons, companies, regiments on foot, large guns, tanks, ambulances, ammunition wagons, etc., usually a double column—the relief and the relieved. Over the hills the ration wagons with double teams reminded one of the typical prairie schooner. One of the boys compared them to the advertisement of twenty mule team borax and there was indeed a striking similarity.

This was certainly a desolate country. There had been a few trees, especially the hedges along the roadside, but they had all been mowed to the ground. One evening a few of us walked over Hill 304, where 200,000 had been killed in 1916. It was a solid mass of destruction. Skeletons were in abundance. Trenches half full of gas colored water, barbed wire, old rifles, hand grenades, shells, machine guns and every other implement were strewn out all over the hill. I saw a few abandoned cannon, one of which appeared to have been torn asunder by an enemy shell. Even near the top of the hill were huge shell holes full of gas poisoned water with no possible means of drainage. There was not one hundred square feet of

earth on the entire hill that had not been riddled by shells. A few graves were noticed, marked by a rude wooden cross and the deceased's helmet. Old knapsacks, packs, belts and various other equipment were scattered all over the hills. Communication wires were in a solid mass of entanglement. Dugouts connected with the trenches were half full of water and the other half was full of rats, abandoned equipment, etc. Ingenious engineering cannot remove the battle scars from the hill, but it will forever be an interesting exhibit for the sight-seeing tourists who will come from America for the next generation to see what is left of the Hindenburg line.

Yes, we were really on the famous Hindenburg line. Back in Camp Travis we had learned a song, part of which contained the words, "I'll hang my pants on the Hindenburg line." This prediction materialized with us. While we were there one of our boys washed his pants and hanged them up to dry. A Boche observation balloon evidently saw the pants and perhaps they had also heard of our threat. A few shells soon began falling and within a few minutes all there was left of our comrade's pants was one leg.

Nothing very exciting happened during our

stay in this desolate place. We spent our spare time in improving our pup tents. Most of us had stretched our tents over small shell holes, which we had trimmed out and dried with a fire. We strengthened them with old scraps of sheet iron, which we found scattered all over the hill. It rained a great deal of the time, but we seldom got wet. There was no sign of habitation for 30 kilometers except American soldiers, consequently we were quite a distance from the rail-head and our rations were rather short. For breakfast we would have bully beef, hard tack and coffee; for dinner, hard tack, bully beef and water and for supper, coffee, corned beef and hard tack.

There was an American cemetery on the opposite side of the road from us and several times each day we could hear taps being blown, indicating that our comrade had made the supreme sacrifice and was being laid to rest.

The Huns had been on the run so much for the previous two weeks that the front lines were a considerable distance from our location by Béthincourt. However, the artillery and bombing planes bothered us quite a bit, especially the latter. Almost every night Fritz came over and kicked

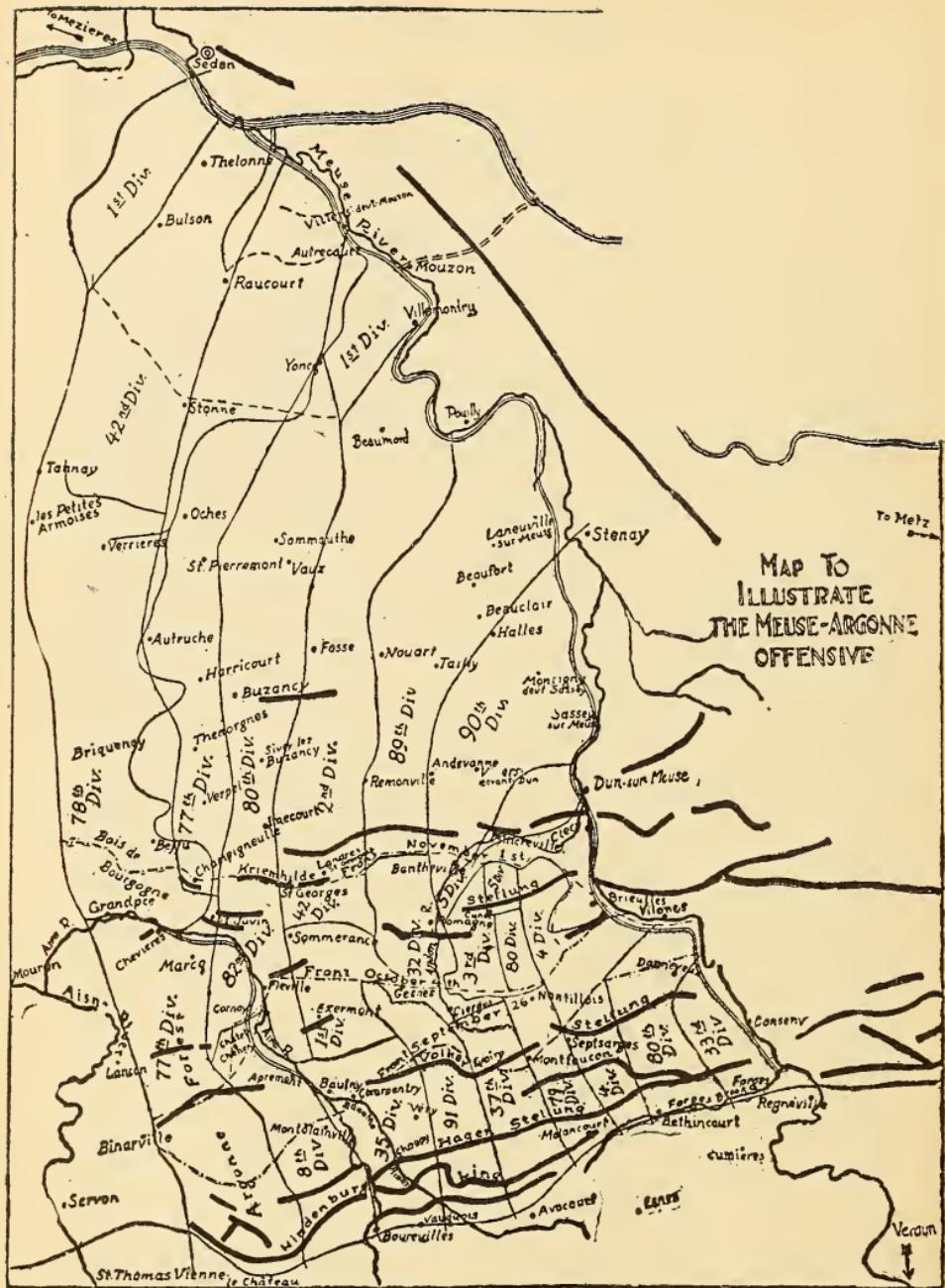
his end gate out. One night he came too close to be comfortable. His bombs began to fall near us, boom, boom, boom, and we could hear him coming closer. There was a good emergency dugout in the old trenches immediately behind us on the hill and many of us deserted our pup tents and took refuge in the old dugout, which was damp and musty and inhabited by some trench rats that old Noah evidently let sneak up the gang plank of the Ark. I found a bunk and soon felt that the plane wouldn't bother me much, but the rat whom I had for a bed mate worried me quite a lot; he wouldn't keep still. The Kaiser evidently had trained him the usual military period because he was of good military physique, full of activity, apparently well fed and had the characteristic of a soldier in not knowing what bunk to select; however, he was not hostile. Perhaps he considered himself a prisoner of war. We got along fairly well together until about 3 a. m., when, the planes being out of hearing, I made my way back to my little tent and spent the remainder of the night. Some of the boys of another outfit on the other side of the hill were not so fortunate as we were. Some were killed by bombs from the planes while seeking safety in the trenches.

CHAPTER XII.

MEUSE-ARGONNE.

While the Second Battalion was located on the hill back of Bethincourt, the First Battalion was in the vicinity of Malancourt and Headquarters was near Cuisy. We had left "E" Company near Camp Sud, where they were doing some work on aviation hangars.

On October 22nd, our infantry went into the front line trenches and in the afternoon the First and Third Battalions of the 357th Infantry took Bantheville. Simultaneously, the First Battalion of our engineers moved up to Madeleine Farm where was experienced some of the hardest part of the war. There were no dugouts nor trenches to protect them from the shells and bombs. There were a few old wooden barracks which would not even turn the rain. Our men were scattered out all along the valley and hills. The only protection was the many little holes which they had dug for themselves. The enemy shelled them constantly all the time. As soon as our "B" Company arrived at their advance location the



MAP TO
ILLUSTRATE
THE MEUSE-ARGONNE
OFFENSIVE

shells began to burst. The kitchen was broken up immediately and several casualties resulted.

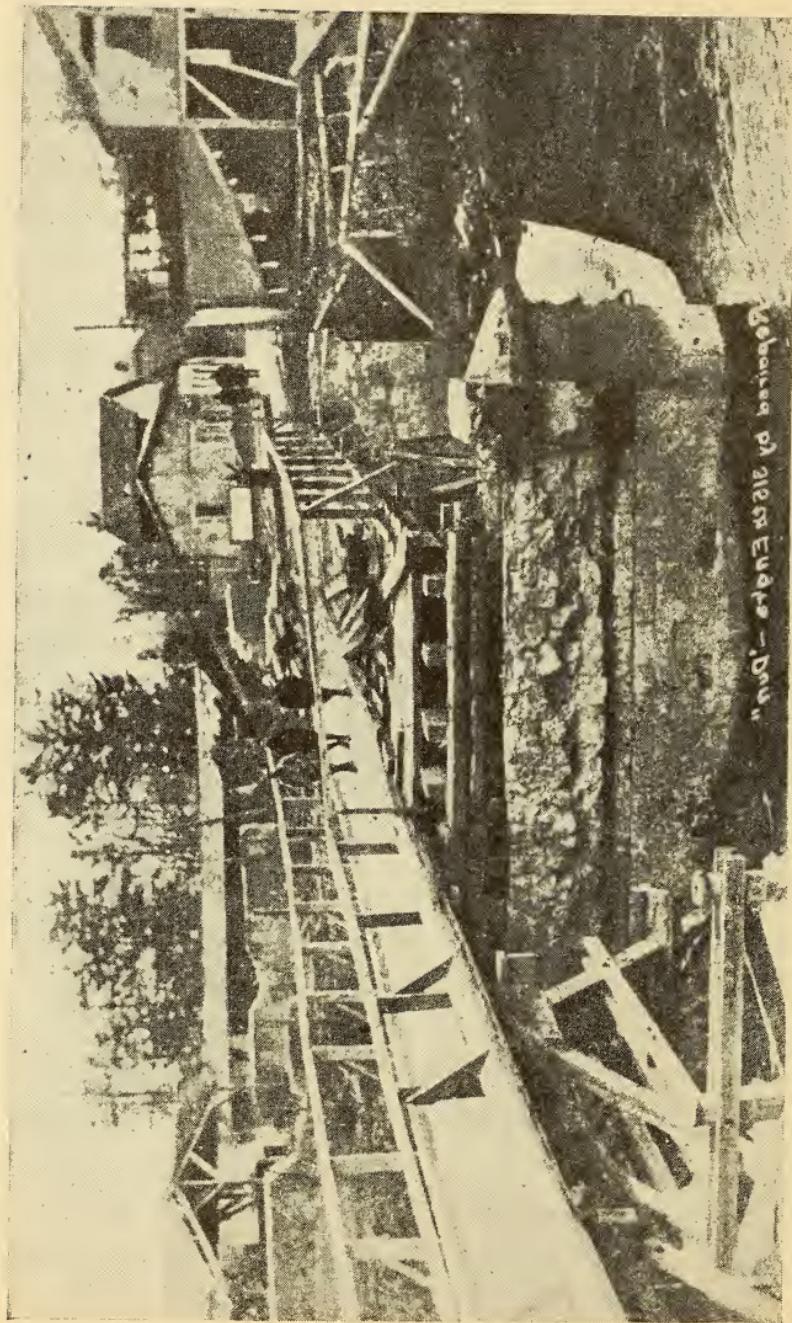
On the 28th the Second Battalion started up to the fateful farm. We passed through Cuisy, Nantillois and Septsarges which had only recently been taken by our troops. We stopped near Cunel about 2:30 p. m., having walked all day. Artillery was strewn out all along the valley and whether or not the shells were intended for us or the artillery we didn't know, but they certainly made it hot for us on our arrival. It was indeed a warm reception and a very unpleasant one. Every fellow had a pick and shovel and was busy digging his own grave. One shell hit within about twenty yards from me. None of the fragments hit me, but rocks and gravel from the hole it made seemed to play "Deutschland über Alles" on my tin derby. Our kitchen which was down in the valley about one hundred yards from us was raising an awful smoke in the effort of preparing a greatly needed meal. This made a splendid target for the enemy. Fortunately, many of the shells were duds; had they not been this book would necessarily have had a different author.

As soon as we got our holes dug we felt rea-

sonably safe, although a few of the armistice proposals were still hitting. About sundown dinner and supper was served. To avoid easy detection we were not allowed to gang up. We had to get our meals and go back to our respective holes to eat. After eating the muchly relished meal we lay in our holes peacefully smoking our cigarettes which we camouflaged under our helmets. It was usually when the least tiny light was dangerous that a fellow wanted to smoke the worst. Of course, that's merely human nature and we were still human even if we were living like rats.

After having spent the night safely we got up and got a pretty fair breakfast. We were ordered to move to Romagne which was about four kilometers northeast. We started out down the little valley which was being shelled without intercession. Aeroplanes were fighting all above us. We soon decided that we could not reach Romagne, so we went back and made our home on the opposite side of the Nantillois-Cunel road from where we had slept the night before. Some infantry who had been there a few days before had some holes already dug so we were soon peacefully situated. The shelling did not cease, however. A few hit in the midst of our new

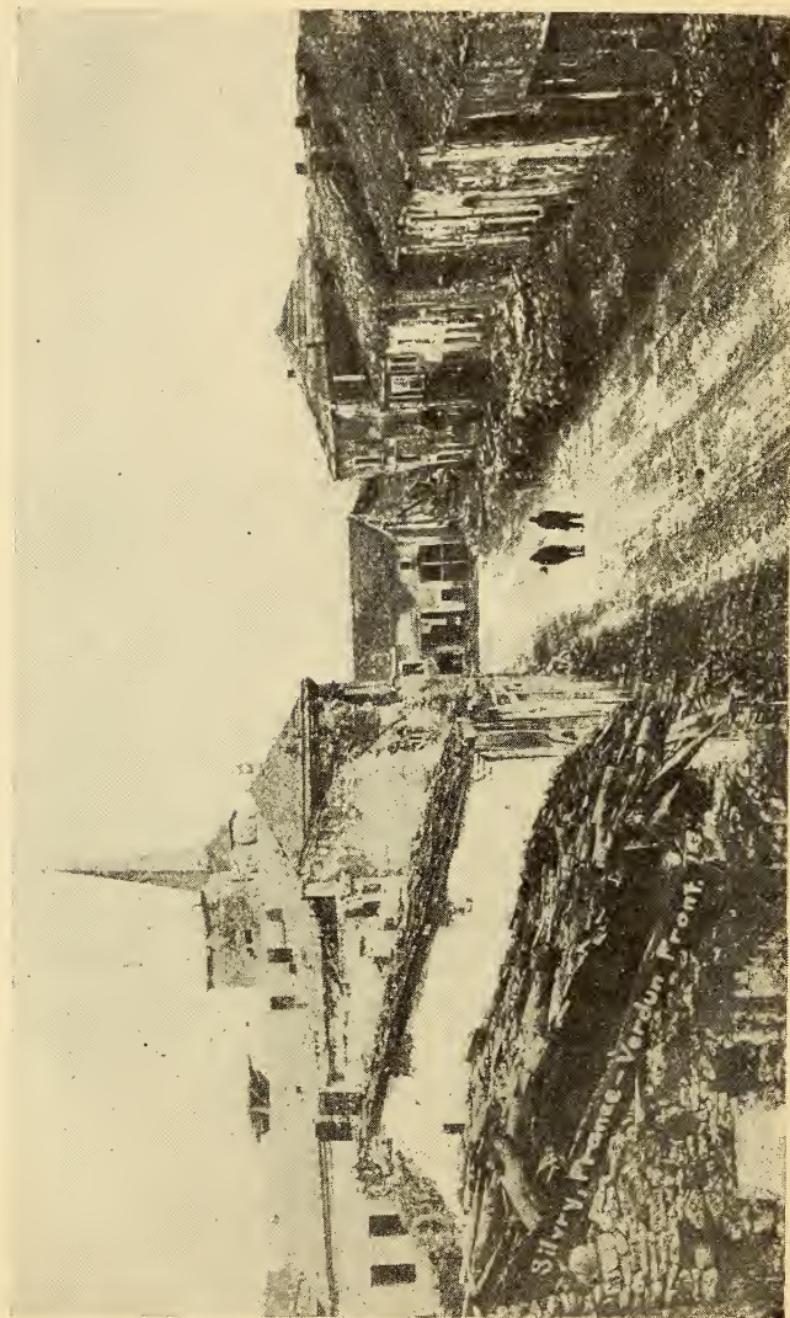
Bridge Repaired by 315th Engineers.



home and killed several mules, but no men. My home was about four feet deep, six feet long and four feet wide. One end of it was covered. My companion was a school teacher from Cedar Falls, Iowa, and his extensive knowledge of the laws of nature, psychology, geometry and impenetrability, together with what I knew of Blackstone, Kent, real estate and domestic relations, enabled us to appreciate the situation and live comfortably.

The next day my bunkie and I went to Romagne with some of the men. Our regiment was constructing dugouts for Division Headquarters. Fritz evidently did not want the famous Texas-Oklahoma Division to be so near him as he made repeated protests with his whizz bangs and G. I. cans to stop the work, but the work went on nevertheless. The shelling was fierce and the low flying planes with machine guns pestered us quite a bit. As soon as we could get one ambulance loaded we would have another squad of wounded to dress. The casualties were many. Several of the severely wounded died afterwards. About night we went on our way back to our home in the bushes. We got lost two or three times, but finally found our way. About

Silvery France, Verdun Front.



the time we arrived a Fritz plane carelessly dropped a big bomb in our neighborhood which made a hole large enough to hold one of our kitchens.

We were now enduring the hardships of war. The entire country was covered with American soldiers with no shelter nor protection except the little holes which we had dug. All the dugouts had been left far behind. We now occupied territory that had not been in the Allies' hands before during the entire war. All the little villages which we had captured had been almost mowed to the ground with scarcely a house left standing with any degree of stability. The nights were very cold as well as part of the day-time. It was now the last days of October and frost was on the ground every morning. It rained almost every day. We were farther away from the railhead than ever and our rations were very scant. Water was so scarce that one canteen full, which is about one quart, had to last us twenty-four hours or more for both drinking and washing purposes. We were within easy shelling range of the enemy and the swarming aeroplanes had no trouble in seeing us scattered out in our respective dens which resembled a

town of prairie dogs. We slept with our gas masks at the alert and our helmets over our face or nearby. My home was about thirty yards from a cemetery where about a score of our boys were buried. A number of horses and mules were also buried nearby.

After our experience at Romagne we went to bed and felt quite comfortably. We did not suffer much uneasiness as we felt that our barrage would soon start and drive the Huns to final defeat.

Every day there was active artillery shelling and aerial activity. One day two of our sergeants were going back for rations. They were between a crossroads and a string of our batteries of artillery. The enemy seemed to be shelling both. Shells began to hit between the two objectives which made it rather unpleasant. There was a kitchen of another organization not far away. Nearer and nearer the explosives came to the kitchen and as the sergeants saw another hit they looked around to see the torn limbs of the cooks going up in the air, and the kitchen blown to smithereens. What could be more nerve-racking?

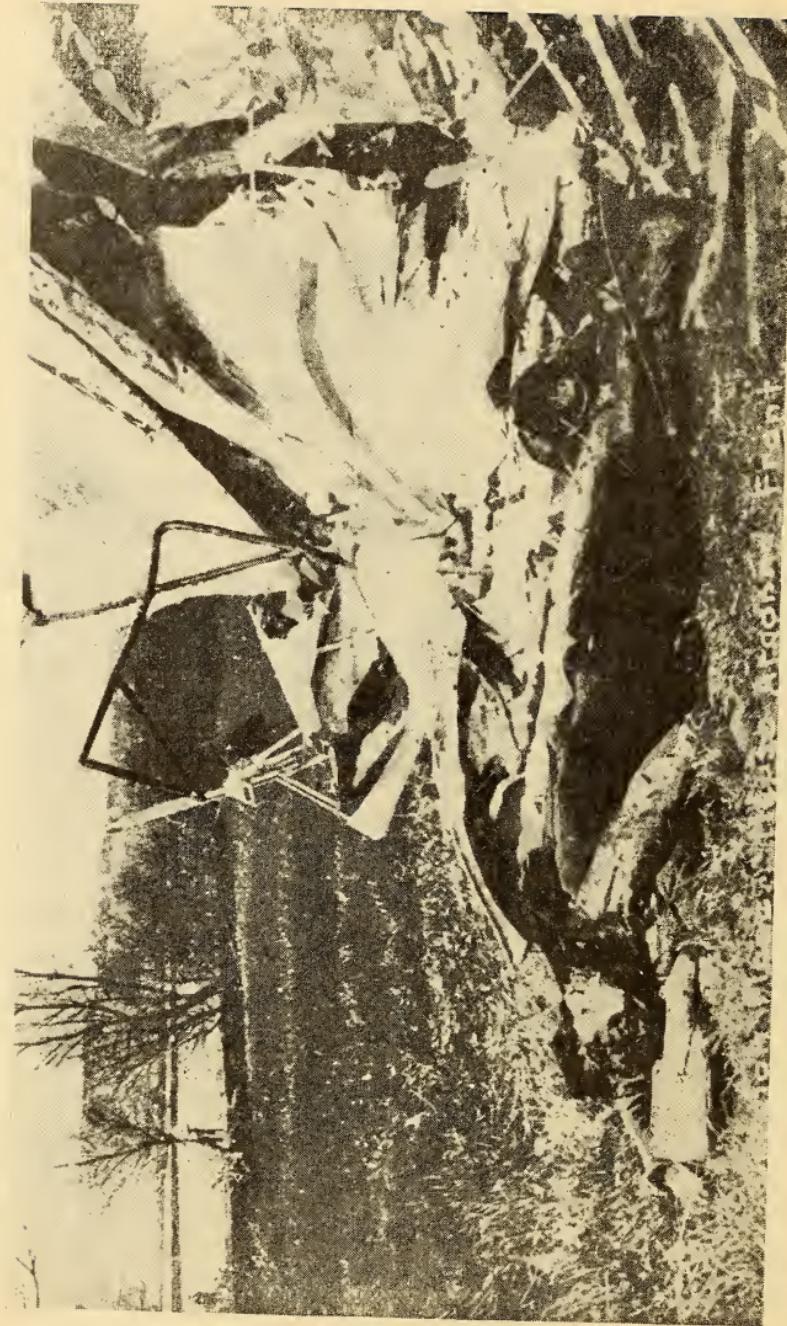
One day during an aerial battle some of the

boys were interested spectators. They heard the clatter of the machine gun, but did not notice any damage that it was doing. After the fight was over and the planes had flown away one of the boys noticed that his gas mask rattled and he suggested that his buddie had gotten the wrong mask, which is usually the first thing a soldier does whenever he finds anything wrong with his equipment. His friend insisted that he had his own mask. After a close examination the man found that his mask was perforated with machine gun bullets.

On the morning of November 1st, our barrage started. The air was aflame and the earth trembled and quivered. Those of us in small dugouts were troubled by the dirt falling in. The gigantic guns bellowed incessantly as they sent forth our peace notes to the Kaiser. By daylight nothing could be seen but smoke and nothing could be heard but the awful roaring. Before noon most of our boys had gained their objectives for the day.

That is a day never to be forgotten by all of us of the Ninetieth Division who were able to be there. All the large guns were shooting at one and two minute intervals. Along with the 155's

German Planes Brought Down by Our Aviators.



the 75's did their bit. As one fellow said the latter were "barking like hound pups." The entire division advanced as the earth quivered from the tremendous vibrations. The engineers were working on roads some of which had been torn up by our own guns, only a few days previous.

Part of the Second Battalion started on the way to Bantheville and Ancreville. Heavy shelling in the vicinity of the former place halted us. The immense traffic along the road was interrupted by the shelling. We halted at a dressing station with orders not to proceed further until the shelling ceased or at least slackened. The shells were hitting nearer all the time, but we were sending over a dozen to one. The enemy, in most places, were running too fast. Our more remote artillery began to get behind and many of the big guns now began to move up for new positions. We were putting over a so-called creeping barrage. Evidently Fritz was on the run. In some instances, however, he was running toward us with hands up, yelling "Kamerad," the proof of that fact being the many prisoners which were being constantly marched by. Gas shells began to hit among us, but without any very bad effects. One hit among a string

of the prisoners and quite a lot of sneezing and coughing was indulged in by the Heinies which was caused from their own gas. Returning ambulances laden with the wounded proved that our doughboys had not gone over the top without losses.

We soon had orders to move back about one kilometer as we could not reach our objective that day. As soon as we moved back we were gassed again, which resulted in a few men being sent to the hospitals. Night began to fall and we had no place to sleep, so we marched back about five kilometers to our prairie dog home in the bushes. We spent our farewell night in that locality.

November 2nd was marked by further advances. We started out and kept going. Some of our heavy artillery had moved up and was now located above Bantheville. The earth continued to shake. The roads were strewn with the carnage of horses and men and splinters of wagons and trucks. The holes in the road were repaired by us as we made our advance. Just north of Bantheville a low flying aeroplane shot into our bunch with its machine gun. It soared sneakingly out from behind the woods and in the man-

ner of a chicken hawk, dived for its prey. Three men were wounded, two of whom afterwards died. It was now about noon and we were some two kilometers north of Bantheville, where the infantry had gone over the top that morning. The hills were covered with the dead, many of our own boys, but more of the enemy. Our First Battalion had now located its P. C. at Bantheville and it immediately sent out salvage and burying details over the field.

In a little valley between Bantheville and Villers-devant-Dun we were working, trying to repair the road so that the muchly needed ammunition could pass. Our own shells had wrought havoc all along there less than forty-eight hours previous. A railroad nearby had been shelled and the huge steel rails had been bent and broken as if they were rotten wooden planks. The road was soon repaired to the extent that some more artillery crossed the ravine and was immediately emplaced on the hill, on the opposite side of the stream. Fritz, as usual, knew that a road was being repaired, which led to his destruction and he sent over several "peace proposals" to try to stop it; however, they were met with the same

answer as those which had come from Vienna and Berlin.

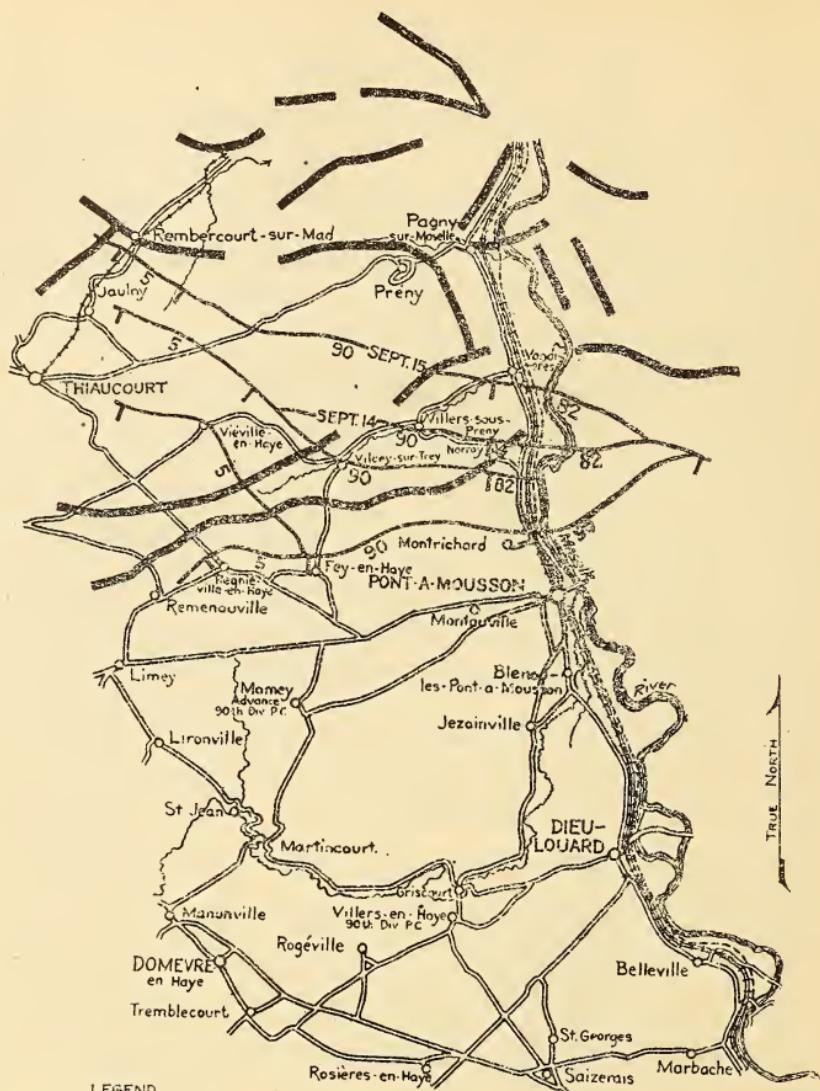
The Huns had run off and left one of their big guns and several shells. Some of the artillery gunners made an inspection of it and decided to try it out. They began sending Fritz some of his own shells, without cessation. Their major was talking to their captain near where the engineers were at work: "Captain, have those boys who are shooting that Dutch gun any definite objective?" The Captain replied: "No, sir, but they may hit something accidentally. They are changing positions after each shot. They said that they wanted to give Fritz hell so long as his ammunition lasted and I told them to go after him."

About 2 p. m. our dinner was brought to us, which was to last us until noon the next day. At dark we were told to dig in and spend the night. It was cold and had been raining slowly but steadily ever since noon. It was so dark that a stack of black cats would have looked like the sunset from the Golden Gate, but each of us grabbed a spade or a pick and began to dig. The ground digged rather easily as it was so wet and we soon had some good sized loblollies made. Everything

was wet, our overcoats, our blankets and all of our equipment. None of us had more than two blankets, as the most of our stuff was being hauled up on a wagon. We soon crawled in and spent a few miserable hours in the midst of several deadly shells from the Gott inspired Huns.

A part of "F" Company who had stayed behind in the forenoon winding up affairs in the rear, reached us about 9 p. m. In the dark and rain they unrolled their blankets on the wet ground for a night's rest. About 4 a. m. they got orders to roll pack and move back because they were on the wrong road. They had orders to proceed above Bantheville, but we were merely on a by-road, the main road being to our right in the direction of Ancreville. The boys reluctantly got up and rolled their wet blankets as a little profanity was dispensed. One of the boys said, "Sherman said war was hell. He didn't know anything about war. Hell is a rest camp compared with war."

The next morning the remainder of us, that is our original party, crawled out of our hog wallows, rolled our muddy blankets and after shivering around awhile waiting for orders we started out toward Ancreville via Bantheville.



LEGEND

- American Daily Lines of Advance
 - Enemy Defenses
 - Numbers Indicate Divisions in Line
 - Roads
 - Canals
 - Railroads, Standard Gauge Double Track
 - Railroads, Standard Gauge Single Track
- 5 | 90

**AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
315TH REGIMENT ENGINEERS
90TH DIVISION**

MAP SHOWING PART OF
THE ST. MIHIEL SALIENT
To Accompany History of 315TH Engineers
Scale 1:100,000.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Km

IN 1 SHEET.

SHEET No 1

Traced *J.E.C.*
Checked *J.E.C.*

Submitted *Capt. Engrs. Regt. Off.*
Capt. Engrs. Regt. Off.

Approved *Col. Engrs.*
Col. Engrs.

Date *Apr 5 1919*
M 21

As we passed along the road the side of which was dotted with German holes such as we had been living in, we saw numbers of dead Germans on their bunks who apparently had been gassed. Some were sitting erect. It was a deathly sight. All of the adjoining fields were strewn with the dead. We reached Ancreville about 10 a. m., tired, sleepy and hungry. Six of us had one can of corned beef and it tasted like plank steak.

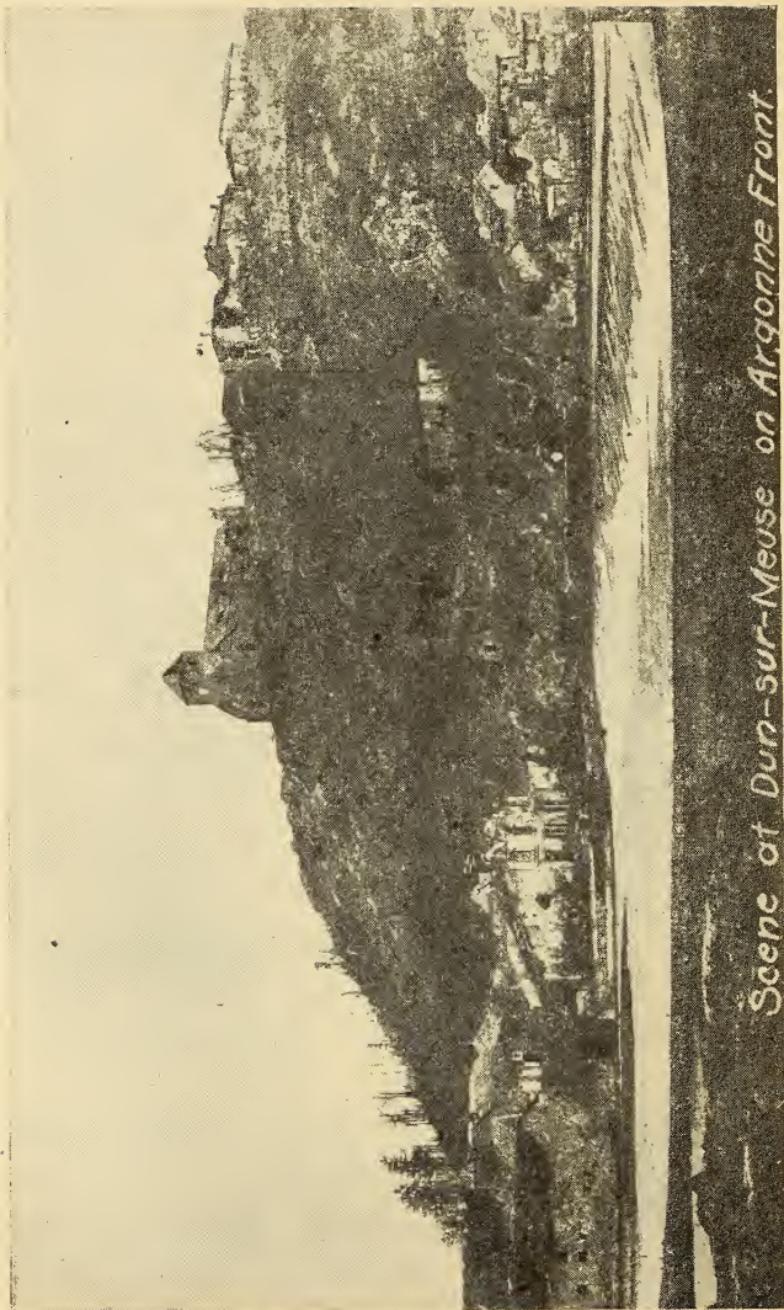
These were moving days with our Division. No sooner would we get our packs unrolled than we would get orders to move. The Division P. C. moved three times in 'four days during our advance.

While at Ancreville we learned the news that Turkey had surrendered and the Bosporus Strait was open to the world. The British fleet had sailed through the Dardenelles. The news came from Corps Headquarters, being small pamphlets dropped by aeroplanes. The pamphlets further said, "Strike hard. Make the final blow," which was soon done.

After getting a good dinner and some Y. M. C. A. chocolate we felt stimulated enough to make another move, which we did after seeing a few aerial battles. About 2 p. m. we started

Scene at Dun-sur-Meuse on Argonne Front.

Scene at Dun-sur-Meuse.



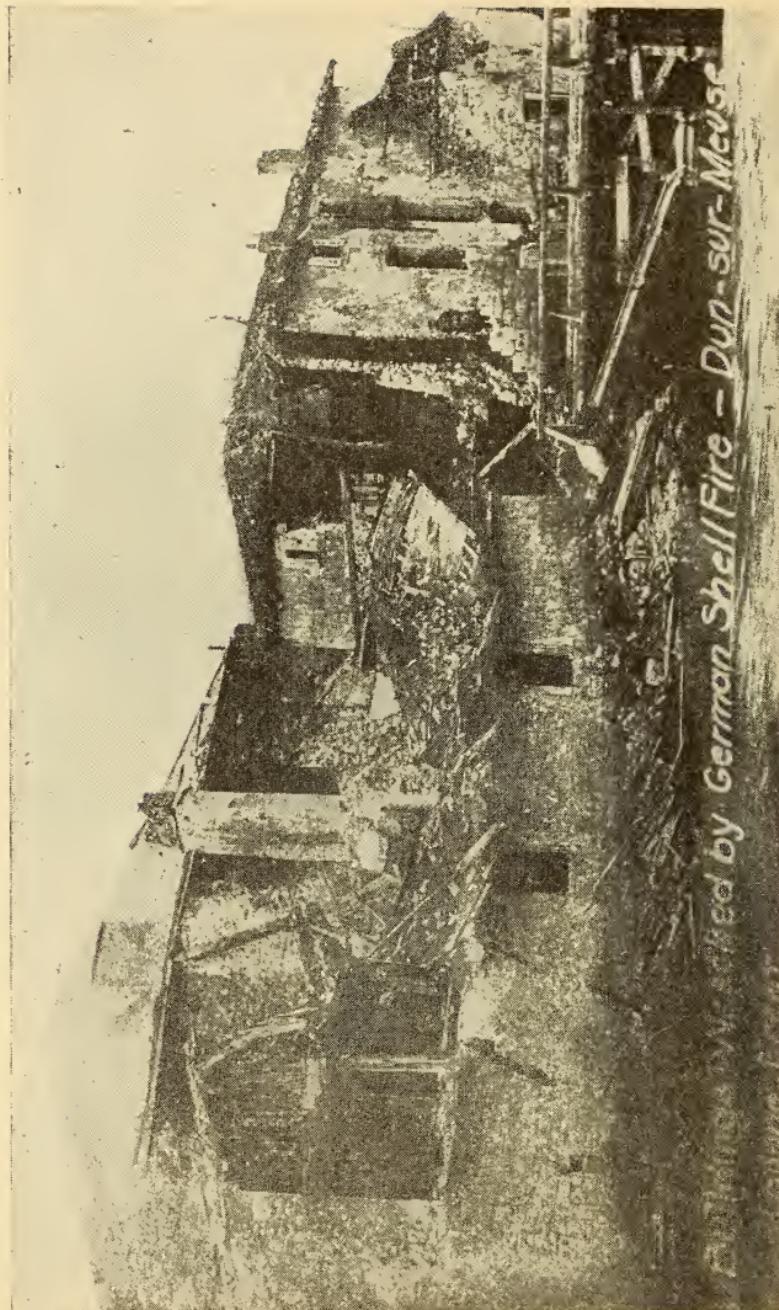
northwestward. We soon passed the part of the 359th Infantry which was going up to relieve the boys in the front lines. The road was a moving mass of soldiers and the enemy began to shell us, but we kept going. About 4 p. m. we reached Villers-devant-Dun, which had been evacuated by the enemy only twenty-four hours before. The majority of the houses were roofless, but they were a great deal better shelter than none at all. The two streets were knee deep in thin slushy mud.

We were now almost due east from Grand Pre and about eighteen kilometers northwest from Dun-sur-Meuse.

It was about six kilometers to the Meuse River in the direction of Stenay. Our entire regiment was soon in the little village and we all stayed there for two whole days without moving. The planes buzzed over us quite a bit at nights and caused us to put out the lights as usual. Otherwise there was not much excitement.

The roads were crowded and jammed beyond reasonable conception. Ammunition, rations, heavy guns, and organizations on foot were trying to move. The latter usually in both directions. The Montigny road above Villers was on a hill

Buildings Wrecked by German Shells - Duz-sur-Meuse



side and the endless stream of trucks, wagons, ambulances, horses, mules, guns and men made a splendid target for the enemy. The military police and our engineers had a difficult task keeping the traffic going. The huge shell holes and the deep mud made traveling very dangerous and necessarily cautious. Several roads were restricted to one way traffic.

Burying details were organized as the fields were strewn with our dead comrades. Our good chaplain led this work until every soldier who had gone to the world beyond who could be found was buried with all the decency that the situation afforded.

After staying in Villers only two days our First Battalion moved ahead to the vicinity of Montigny. On Friday morning, Nov. 8th, they were shelled heavily. "A" Company suffered about fifteen casualties, some of them being fatal. The company withdrew from the village and as they turned to see what damage the shells were doing they saw many of the billets they had vacated blown into fragments.

A hidden sniper created quite a lot of excitement one afternoon by throwing three trench mortar bombs into the edge of Villers. For-

tunately, no one was hit and some of the boys located the Dutchman and put him out of his misery.

Our ambulances and trucks now began to run with lights at night. The enemy was on the run. News came that our doughboys had crossed the Meuse in some places and that they were chasing the Germans in trucks. This proved to be correct dope, too. Victory was in sight. The news came that Austria had surrendered. The papers gave the details of the terms and showed the new battle front on the southern frontier of Germany. It was suggested that it would now be an easy matter for the Italians to march across Austria into Hunland. Germany must withdraw some of her troops from the Western Front to keep the Wops back. The withdrawal was taking place rather hurriedly, but many victims of Hohenzollern Militarism who had met the American Divisions had been left on the battle field. The Belgians, British and French were pushing ahead to our north.

Along with the other joyous tidings came the news that the German representatives were on their way to meet Marshal Foch to discuss the armistice terms. We felt that our

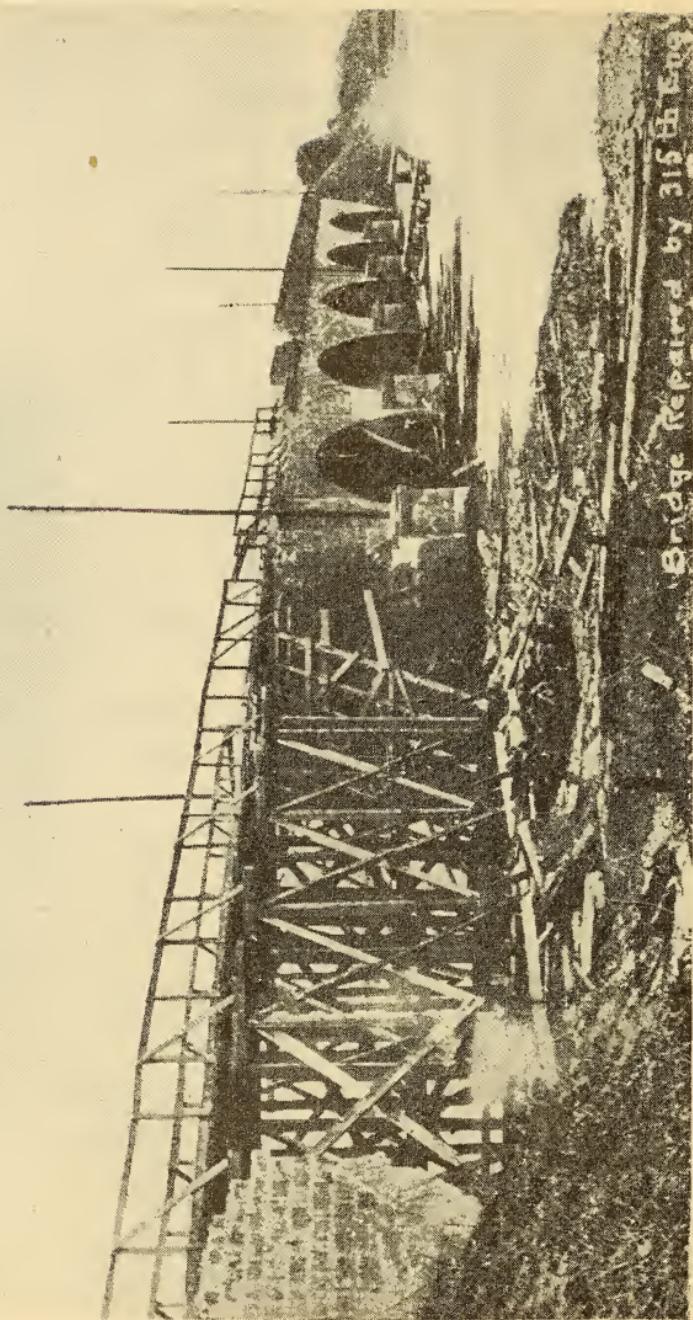
terms inevitably would be accepted because the enemy could not possibly gain anything by fighting longer. The enemy knew that they were dealing with civilized countries and that the terms, ever so drastic, could not be so disastrous as an invading enemy who were entitled and prepared to exact revenge. The Kaiser had abdicated and fled and revolutions were breaking out all over the German Empire. What other conclusion could we reach except that the end of the war was only a matter of days, if not hours?

About the 7th, our "E" Company moved nearer the river and located at Halles. They were kept quite busy building bridges to enable our victorious troops to cross. They were uncomfortably close to the enemy and the 75's rained down on the little village every night. One morning a bunch of the boys got up to find that the back end of their house had been torn off.

On Saturday night, November 9th, the Second Battalion P. C., with "D" and "F" Companies, had orders to move from Villers-devant-Dun to somewhere across the Meuse. About 7:30 p. m. we started out in the rain and mud. When the companies crossed the river they found the Stenay-Dun-sur-Meuse road badly torn up so that it

Bridge Repaired by 315 H.A.C.

Wagon Bridge Across The Meuse.

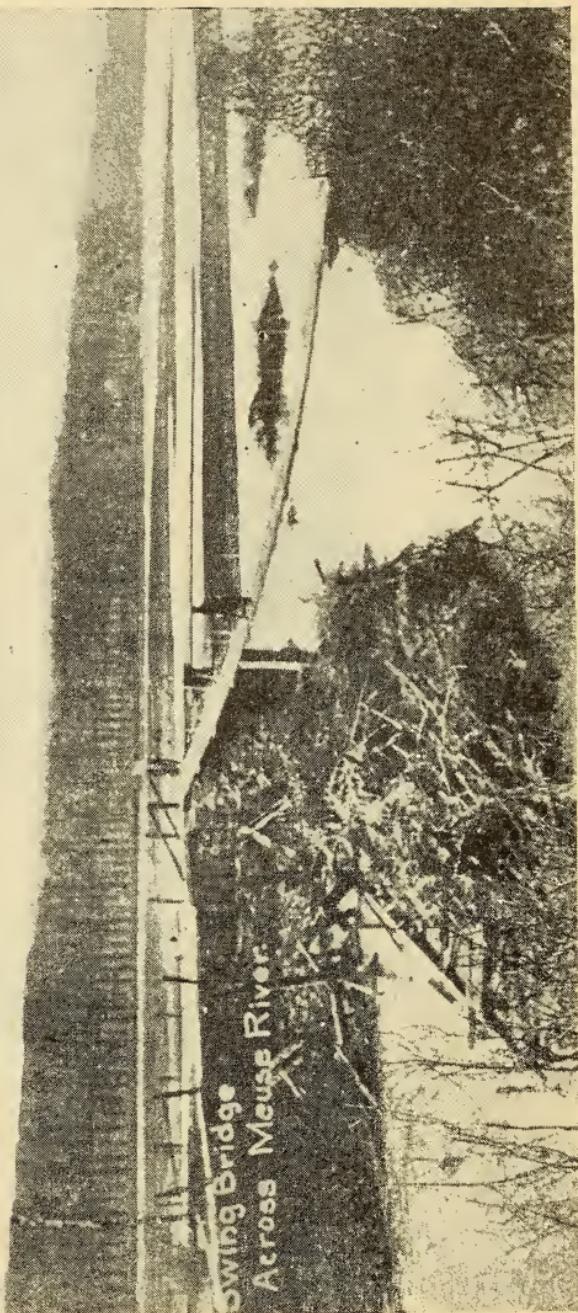


was almost impassable. The infantry and the engineers were all mixed in together and the former had to pass on and take their positions on the trenches. Amidst the heavy shelling the road was repaired and a bridge constructed across a stream in the edge of Mouzay.

Those of us with the P. C. did not cross the river that night. We found a comfortable billet in Sassy sur Meuse. The night was rather cold. The next morning we were outside looking at the unusually heavy frost and we suddenly noticed a company of machine gunners coming down the street with their gas masks on. They resembled the KU KLUX KLAN. We wondered if they were wearing their masks to prevent their noses from getting frost bitten. There was no evidence of any gas, but we did not care to debate the question, so we made a dash for our masks and played safety first for a few minutes. We soon crossed the river in search of the companies which we found with various other units of our division scattered all along the big road immediately south of Mouzay.

In the meantime "E" Company, which was just above us on the west bank of the Meuse, underwent heavy machine gun fire while constructing

Swing Bridge Across The Meuse.



a foot bridge across the river. With a tenacity of a bulldog they kept at work until the bridge was completed. Two regiments of infantry then passed over to give the enemy another chase.

When our outposts had cleared Mouzay of snipers we moved in and found comfortable billets. The Germans had left in such a hurry that they did not have time to destroy anything. In the meantime we had had a combination breakfast and dinner, consisting of corn willy and bread, which seemed as good as an oyster course dinner to us.

Fritz had managed to set up some more artillery in spite of his continuous retreat and the last night of the war was marked with considerable shelling activity in our vicinity. Some of our boys were standing at the crossroads at the edge of town and suddenly a bursting shell killed one instantly and wounded two others. Most of the shells were gas, but not the most poisonous kind. They made some of us rather sick, but none had to go to the hospital.

The next morning we got up as usual and made the chow line, but things were comparatively quiet. We had heard the evening before that our infantry was going over the top and

it was quite evident that if they had it had been without artillery support. Everything was too still. Some of the doughboys came back to town to fill their canteens and informed us that they did not go over that morning, all of which they themselves could not understand. They were puzzled about it. The night before they were ordered to go over, but they had been changed.

Soon the news began to spread that the armistice had been signed and that all firing would cease at 11 a. m. It came from authentic sources and no one doubted it. We really thought that it was a fact and we watched the last few minutes go by with great anxiety. We were not disappointed. At 11 a. m. on the 11th day of the 11th month the echoes of the last few scattering shots died away in the distance. Everything was still, everything was quiet. The most terrible struggle in the history of the world was at an end.

CHAPTER XIII.

PEACE.

The news was received seriously but not jubilantly. We were too worn out to make any demonstration. Our sick rate had been very heavy for the previous two weeks. Our food had been scant and we had been sleeping in the cold rain and mud. We had been hiking in the rain, over shell torn roads with our packs on. We had had our comrades shot down in our very midst. The jar and flare of the big guns had unnerved us. Our music in the great drama had been the constant roar of artillery, the buzz of the aeroplanes and the rattle of machine guns. The drinking water which we had had to drink was very bad and many of the boys were still sick from the effects of it. Consequently there was no manifestation of hilarity. One friend would meet another and ask him if he knew that the armistice was signed. "Yes, I heard it, that's good," he would soberly reply, which was usually accompanied with a slight nod of the head. We were so "all in" that the news apparently

created less excitement than some insignificant rumors which had been current back in the trenches, such as "We are going back to Recey and vicinity for the winter." We had to have reflecting time before we could appreciate what had happened and what an important factor we had been in the happening.

News came in that many of the Germans just over the hill were shouting and dancing with joy, and that in some instances they were drinking coffee and beer with the Sammies and telling the latter that they were all "Kamerads." These were rare exceptions, however, because some of our dead comrades were scarcely cold and the usual temper of our boys impelled them to refuse any invitations on the part of the enemy.

On the afternoon of the 11th, details of engineers were sent into Stenay, which was about four kilometers north of Mouzay, to search for and clear the town of mines. The Germans were not to be trusted even yet. They could perhaps kill scores of our men by the setting of a trap. A few mines were found and were promptly eliminated. A large barracks which had been used for a hospital had not been

mined, presumptively because they had not had time to evacuate the patients and emplant the mines before making their hasty retreat. This barracks was, therefore, designated as a billet for the entire regiment except the infirmary, officer's quarters and Regimental and Battalion "P. C.'s" which were in the large dwellings.

Later in the afternoon, Stenay was reported safe and we were ordered to move in. We arrived there after dark and found good billets and feather beds. We were cautioned not to touch anything with a wire or string to it as the enemy was barely out of town. In one place some of the boys found the bodies of several Germans and Americans killed in a hand to hand fight within less than twenty-four hours previous. We had first occupied the town three or fours days before and had withdrawn because of so many snipers.

The next few days certainly were days of rest and joy. We began to realize what we had done. The New York Herald brought us news of the armistice terms. Germany had surrendered so many aeroplanes, big guns, battle cruisers, machine guns, locomotives and various other implements of war and industry

that it was not reasonable to think that hostilities could be resumed. "The war is over. We have obtained everything that we were fighting for" President Wilson was telling the people back in the States. We had visions of the joyous celebrations back home. We began to flood the post-office with letters and also sent many telegrams to our friends and relatives that we were "O. K.," "Safe and Sound," "Well and Happy," etc.

In Stenay we enjoyed comforts that we had scarcely known during our army career. We found feather beds, upholstered furniture, good stoves and some fuel, rugs, carpets and musical instruments. Of course all of these belonged to the Frenchmen who had been forced to abandon their homes, and we were cautioned not to take anything, but we were at liberty to use them, which was all we cared about. There was a good piano about 100 meters from where my bunch slept and we had no difficulty in carrying it to our home one night while the guard was walking the other end of his post.

Our Artillery Brigade, which had not been with us before, had moved up ready to wipe Germany off of the map when the armistice

was signed, so the entire Division was in our vicinity. Boys from different organizations would meet their brothers, cousins and friends and exchange the history of their ups and downs and ins and outs, which had been mostly downs and outs.

Around the old German camps we found quite a number of boxes which had come from various places in Mexico. This corroborated other evidence which our Government had gathered and we were thoroughly convinced that Mexico had been shipping supplies to Germany during the war.

About the next thing on the program was the installation of bath facilities, etc., in order that all the men could have muchly needed baths. Many had gone for three or four weeks without a bath and had slept with their clothes on, shoes and all for a whole week at a time. It devolved upon the Medical Detachment to inspect every man in the regiment for cooties and scabies and make a roster of those thus affected. This was some job. The percentage was alarmingly high. We discovered that it would have been much easier to make a roster

of those who were NOT affected and considerable paper would have been saved.

All of our stay in Stenay was not rest and in addition to cleaning up ourselves there was other cleaning to be done. General Pershing issued an order that now as the war was over we must be military and snap into it, et cetera; that we must maintain our military discipline because our conduct was the index of America; that we had won the greatest war in history and were the pride of Uncle Sam and we were to be rewarded for the hardships endured and bravery manifested by being permitted to clean up our guns, bayonets, helmets, gas masks, wagons, harness, saddles, trucks, ambulances, caissons, etc., and drill some every day, and so forth, or words to that effect.

“Orders is orders” in the army, therefore we began our daily drilling. The weather was quite cool and quite a lot of pep was manifested. We only drilled about three hours each day, which was not so terribly terrible, as that was practically all we had to do except the aforesaid policing up. We really had no grounds of complaint. The whizz bangs and G. I.’s were not tormenting us any more. Gas

had been replaced by frost. The passing traffic from the front was no longer our ambulances laden with our wounded comrades but consisted of captured or surrendered artillery. We had ample time for sleep and rest, there being about thirteen hours of darkness; however, we were now at liberty to light lamps or candles. Our corn willy and salmon had been replaced with large juicy steaks. Our beds were warm and dry. Our health was soon normal again. The delousers had captured thousands of the enemy's last allies, the cursed cooties. We had actually ridded our uniforms of the mud from "Sunny France" and where necessity required, equipped with new uniforms out and out.

No, indeed. We couldn't complain because "Black Jack" said drill. We did squads east and west with a pomp and dignity, consistent with our bravery in the trenches. We "snapped it up." If we were going into Germany we wanted to show the Kaiser's subjects what a bunch of real soldiers really looked like.

On Saturday, Nov. 16th, our Division passed in review before Major General Allen who was being transferred away from us. Those who

won the Distinguished Service Cross were decorated as we stood in the cold wind on the muddy prairie. The General's praise for his division is shown by the following memorandum which was sent to every organization:

"Headquarters Ninetieth Division,
American Expeditionary Forces,
France.

November 21, 1918.

MEMORANDUM:

*To the Officers and Men of
the Ninetieth Division:*

Having served with you throughout your period of organization, training and fighting—from the arrival of the first recruit at Camp Travis to the last shot at Stenay and Baalon when the armistice became effective—I am now constrained by instructions from General Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, to leave you when you are headed toward Germany as part of the Army of Occupation. This separation* has given me so much pain that renunciation of the Corps Command persisted in my mind.

Your superb comportment everywhere in

France, as well as your unsurpassed battle exploits, have won for you a designation in the Army of Occupation; your wonderful fighting ability and your superior manhood have won for you a place in my heart that will remain with me for all time.

The fathers and mothers who have produced men such as you, who know not battle straggling nor retreat under any circumstances, must be thrilled when they learn your stories. The states to which you and they belong possess the prime essentials of prosperity and greatness.

The soul of the Ninetieth Division will remain a sacred inspiration to me wherever I be.

(Signed) HENRY T. ALLEN,
Major General."

We regretted very much to lose General Allen because rumors had been afloat that he was a close friend of General Pershing (in fact some said that he was a relative) and that the Commander in Chief was so well pleased with the record of the division, too, that we would be one of the first to go home, etc. In losing General Allen we were afraid that Pershing

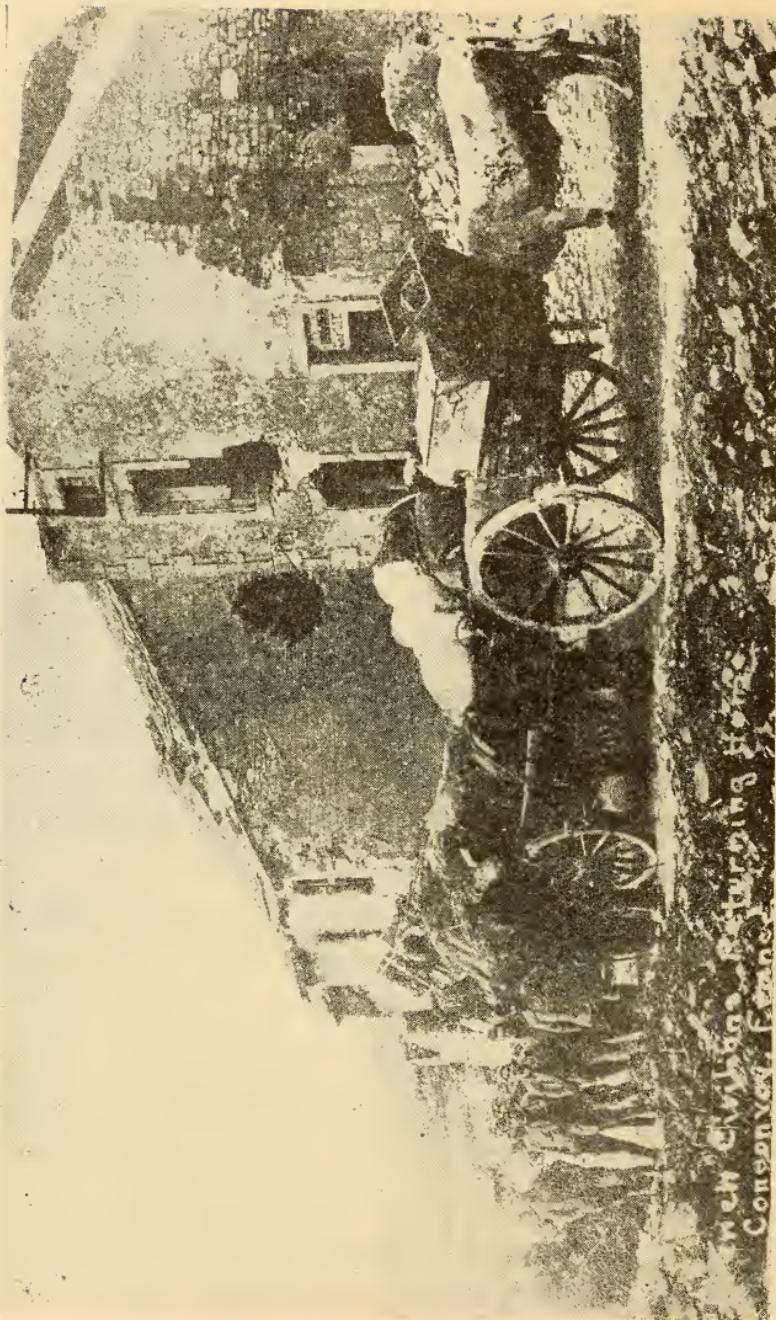
would forget all about the Ninetieth Division being in the A. E. F. In fact it became a joke, told throughout France that ten years after the war was over some one asked the C. in C. where the fighting Ninetieth was, whereupon he exclaimed with the strongest slang expression that his conscience would allow that he had forgotten to take the boys out of the trenches.

About a week after our arrival in Stenay we were alarmed one morning to find the streets full of returned allied prisoners. They were a horrible sight. Their uniforms were dirty and ragged and their faces revealed the hardships which they had endured. There was a variety of nationalities among them and they jabbered and parlez voused with manifestations of great joy. In spite of the trying ordeals of the past months and years they were supremely happy.

The first Sunday we were in Stenay quite a few of us attended church. The church was very magnificent, as most all the churches are. The priest made short talks in both English and French, the substance of which was praising the Americans for what they had done for

France and for humanity. It was not camouflaged with flattery but was very appropriate and impressive and all of us who heard it felt that our time and trouble had been well spent.

The French civilians now began to return to their homes, many of which the pillaging Huns had wrecked and ruined. In Stenay none of the houses were destroyed but lots of the furniture had been carried off or destroyed. Cooking utensils, dishes, etc., were piled pell-mell among the clothes, chairs, rags, dirt, etc. Houses which had been occupied by German soldiers as billets, apparently had not been swept for six months. The French families would come back hauling their entire earthly possessions in a rude wagon or a wheelbarrow, or sometimes carrying it all on their backs. In their flight they had taken with them just what they had had time to collect, consistent with safety. Some mothers who had tiny babies came back pushing the baby buggies. If there were no baby the vehicle would likely be loaded with plunder. In spite of the fact that their homes were ruined and they had suffered from the pangs of hunger, there was a very noticeable sign of happiness about their demeanor.



French Civilians Returning Home.

When they would look about to find their choice piece of furniture or favorite portrait gone, they would console themselves with the thought that the awful war was over and their homes could be rebuilt and they would smile and say "Mais, la guerre est finis."

One day every civilian you could see around the town was shouting with great joy, which at that time we could not understand, but later learned that it was because President Poincare was due to visit them soon. The next day the French President arrived as scheduled. Old Glory and the tricolors of France were very much in evidence and near the "Mairie," or city hall, a formation of our soldiers stood at "present arms" while the band played "Marseillaise" and "The Star Spangled Banner." The President made a short talk in French and after a hearty handshake with each civilian he was soon on his way to some other liberated town.

Another interesting thing we found, was the elegant home of the Crown Prince. It was at the edge of the northwestern part of the city. Both the exterior and the interior were exceedingly attractive. Beautiful palms and



Crown Prince's Home
Stenay, France

flowers added to the beauty on the outside. On the interior the spacious rooms and chambers were exquisitely furnished. The silk curtains, the table linen, the upholstered furniture, and the chandeliers can scarcely be surpassed in either beauty or quality. Some of our officers found it much better than dugouts in the trenches. The dining room with all the beautiful dishes and silverware was certainly more attractive than our kitchens in the muddy trenches.

We talked to a few Stenay people who knew the Crown Prince, and they all seemed to like him. A maid who had been a servant in his palace said that he was a man of regular habits and good manners and that he never dissipated any, usually retiring at 9 p. m. She said that almost every time the Kaiser would visit "Little Willie" they would have a bitter quarrel, most of which she could overhear, and that "Willie" was trying to convince his father of the folly and inexcusable crime of making such a war. Although she admired the Crown Prince she disliked the Kaiser very much and described him as being a man with an iron heart if any heart at all. Her vivid descrip-

tions of him corresponded very much to the cartoons of the American Press.

The next thing—several good shows made their appearance with some jolly entertainment. A REAL stage and some real GIRLS was a treat to us. The music was splendid and some of the jokes were actually new. We were electrified by the new song which the singers told us had been approved by General Pershing as the official song of the A. E. F., the title being "They Didn't Think We'd Do It But We Did."

We next began to speculate as to when we would go home. Some advanced the theory that as we were the backbone of the agricultural industry of the United States, the hungry people back home could ill afford to do without us and that we would get back in plenty time to plant a 1919 crop. Others wondered if peace would be signed before spring and whether or not we would start home before it was signed. The most optimistic ones dreaded the cold trip back across the Atlantic in January or February. Soon the rumors began to spread that we were going to parade in Paris on Thanksgiving Day and later in London

and in New York City Christmas Day, et cetera, and so on. "Beaucoup" francs were wagered pro and con as to how, when, and where we would ever see any of those cities.

The New York Herald soon brought us the news that we had been designated as a part of the Army of Occupation and that we would go to Germany "Toot sweet." This was not mere gossip. It was corroborated by the memo previously sent us by Major General Allen. Military officials considered it a compliment to be in the Army of Occupation as it was evidence of good discipline and a splendid record. If the Huns attempted to start anything G. H. Q. wanted a Division with a good fighting record to be on the ground to show them where to head in AT. However, the majority of us cared very little for any more compliments and preferred to go back to America without having seen Germany.

We knew that staying on the Rhine would defer our trip homeward considerably and that didn't suit us. Some suggested that we send personal letters of protest to the C. in C. but as "Black Jack" is sometimes careless with

his personal correspondence that idea was abandoned. Furthermore, none of us knew the General any too well and as this was not the first time soldiers had ever received any orders to do something that displeased their whims and fancies, we decided to let the matter drop.

One very unpleasant paragraph about our trip to Germany was the fact that we would have to hike. We had walked all over Eastern France and we felt that that was enough, but as higher authority thought differently we rolled up our packs and on Saturday, Nov. 23rd, we bade good-bye to the town which we had liberated in the Eleventh Hour of the World War and started out across the barren hills which had scarcely been inhabited for four years. We were still going eastward and if we were going home it was evidently via Russia, Siberia, Japan and the Pacific.

CHAPTER XIV.

HIKING INTO GERMANY.

Leaving Stenay we marched almost due east passing south of Montmedy, which was one of the chief railroad towns along the Germans' main line of communications. About 4 p. m. we reached an old aviation barracks, about two kilometers west of Marville. Our Second Battalion halted there while Headquarters and the First Battalion went on into town.

We stayed around Marville six nights and five days, doing nothing but wading around in the mud and wondering when and where we were going. During our short stay our rations were very scant. We could not get fresh meat nor white bread. Our menu for Thanksgiving consisted of corned beef, hard tack, prunes and coffee.

On Thanksgiving Day we had orders to roll our packs and move, but owing to the awful downpour of rain we could not reach a good billeting place before night, consequently the orders were changed. The next morning, however, we bade good-bye to Marville and

started on again. We passed through Longuyon and reached Pierrepont about dark, where we spent the night. We had walked about 30 kilometers and everyone was tired, nevertheless we must practice the emergency drill. As we were going into enemy territory and were not sure what kind of reception was awaiting us it was necessary that we should always be prepared to assemble promptly with rifle and bayonet. The drill was very brief. A whistle would sound, all would fall out with belts and guns and after reporting present all were dismissed.

We set out again the next day, many with sore feet, a few of which fell out by the way-side to ride in the ambulance. Some of the companies carried lunch but others had their kitchens serve hot meals en route. Just before noon we climbed up the last hill leading from the sparsely timbered hills and valleys to a high level prairie which ran all the way to Luxemburg except in one among the iron fields near Deutsche-Oth it was interrupted by a stream and companion valley. We spent that night in Deutsche-Oth which is on the boundary line of Lorraine and France and not

over four kilometers from either the Luxembourg or Belgian border. The great steel and iron works in the vicinity made the city a very prosperous one.

My bunch was billeted in a theater and dance hall which was next door to a Gasthaus where plenty of beer, wine and schnapps was to be had. We had a rather temperate crowd and none of us got "schnapped up," however, quite a lot of the beer and wine disappeared. We enjoyed a muchly needed night's rest.

In Deutsche-Oth we found both the Germans who had emigrated there and the natives of Lorraine, or Lothringen. The latter were part French and part German. A good many of both sets could speak a little English and we lost no time in finding out what we could.

We talked to one woman who was born in Rhenish Prussia. She expressed profound love for the Vaterland and said that she was going back there just as soon as peace was settled. Most of the native people, however, were very bitter in their denunciation of the Kaiser.

Almost all of those who denounced the

Kaiser admitted that a conversion had been brought about by the treatment they had received during the war. Many of them who liked Germany better than France before the war hate the former and love the latter now. They said that during the war the French language was suppressed to the extent that it was a severe penalty to speak or write a French word. All the outgoing mail was censored to make sure that no French language was being used and that the writer had not expressed any love or sympathy for the French. The people were arrested and imprisoned for trivial offenses. Furthermore, they told us that there had been great discrimination against Alsace-Lorraine troops. They had been shoved into the very hottest front lines where it meant instant slaughter and their food was not nearly so good as that of the regular German troops. The civilians, also, had been discriminated against in the rationing of food.

The next day, Sunday, Dec. 1st, we continued our march, passing through the prosperous little city of Esch, the first city on Luxemburg soil. There were many large steel

mills there and most of the people were apparently wealthy and the homes very beautiful. We were glad to see American flags in all the windows, however, as all the signs were in Deutsch we felt that we were really in Germany.

The Duchy of Luxemburg is a kind of step-child of the German Empire, and, of course, has been influenced some by the Imperial Government. The Duchess had made vigorous protests against the sending of German troops across her little country at the beginning of the war, but her wishes were ignored by the iron-hearted Kaiser.

In spite of the fact that we were tired and our feet worn almost to the bone we enjoyed going through Luxemburg. There was every indication of prosperity. The soil on those rolling prairies was very fertile and the many little villages very beautiful. Of course, all of this had been untouched by Allies' guns and gases.

About night we arrived in the outskirts of Luxemburg City. We billeted in a village suburb called Hesperange. There we found some interesting things. There was a boy at the house (by the barn in which we stayed)

who was in his first year in High School and he could speak French, German and English. He was quite well informed on most everything and told us a great deal about Germany as well as Luxemburg. On account of Luxemburg's location the people are bilingual, speaking both French and German. The local money is of the same denominations as the French but German money is widely circulated.

The next day we were given a rest as we had hiked three successive days. Quite a few rested by going over the hill about three kilometers to the "City." It chanced to be the writer's luck to be on a foot inspection detail and as soon as the inspection was over a list had to be made of every man whose shoes and feet were worn out, which consumed quite a lot of time. The rest of the day I spent reading the newspapers from the States, a bunch of which had just come in, so my trip to the city had to be deferred.

Luxemburg was the largest city our bunch had seen since we had left Le Havre, except a very few who had seen Dijon and Nancy, France. Naturally the boys came back with

great tales about the size and magnificence of the city. Many declared that it was far ahead of anything that Texas had. They were mistaken as to size because the business section included the residences as has been referred to before. The city has a population of about 20,000.

Very few of our officers failed to see the city. One captain was bawling out one of the men for running off to town. He knew that he was there because he SAW him. Asked why he went to the city the man said that he went for the same purpose, presumably, that the others did—to see the city.

On the 3rd we continued our journey eastward. We now began to speculate as to how much hiking we were going to have to do. We got word that our destination was Coblenz, at the mouth of the Moselle River and the most authentic dope was that it was 200 kilometers away yet, which meant eight days at 25 K's per day. That was a fair estimate as we had to carry most of our equipment and live on rather hard food during the hike. We also had to make allowance for a few days of intervening rest. We began to realize that we would

have to do some travelling if we paraded in New York City on Christmas Day, which had been the latest gossip of the optimists, because we could not reach the Rhine before the 13th. After careful deliberations of the situation we had visions of our Division eating Christmas dinner "Somewhere in Germany."

On the night of the 3rd we billeted in a little village, the name of which I am not certain, on the bank of the Moselle River, which now became "Die Mosel." The weather was rather warm for that season of the year and as we occupied the tall buildings overlooking the river and enjoyed a good breeze it seemed like summer at the seashore.

On the morning of Wednesday, Dec. 4th, with the pride of the true American, our Regiment marched across the bridge which spans Die Mosel, into Rhenish Prussia. Although we were tired and sore from the hiking we realized that we were fortunate, nevertheless. What a "grand and glorious feeling" to march into conquered territory and to know that you are a part of the victorious armies of the world of worlds.

During the day we encountered occasional

showers and muddy roads and we were tired and hungry when we climbed the last hill out of the Mosel Valley up to the prairie above. Our Headquarters and First Battalion billeted in Wasserbillig and the Second went on about 2 kilometers to the little village of Canaan. At these places we rested for three nights and two days.

During this rest we got an introduction to German life and customs. We were billeted again in a dance hall, adjoining a beer house. The people were exceedingly nice to us and some of our bunch who could speak German conversed with them a great deal. We noted that the photographs of the Kaiser and Kaisserin hung on the wall in very elaborate frames. The people at that particular house liked the Kaiser. They agreeably admitted that the war was unjustly provoked but they blamed Hindenburg, Ludendorf, Von Tirpitz and the other war lords and thereby contended that the Kaiser was not responsible. The general sentiment toward the Kaiser seemed to be quite well divided. Some denounced him bitterly.

On Dec. 7th, after having enjoyed a good

rest we continued our hike. We passed through the city of Trier (Treves in French). We marched for more than an hour before we got through the city. We saw many large and beautiful buildings, some of which were real old and of great historical importance. Of course, we did not appreciate this so much at the time but later when many of us visited those places on leave it was very interesting.

As soon as we had crossed the Mosel again we halted for dinner and after two more hours of hiking we arrived in the village of Ehrang, where we rested two nights and one day. For billets in Ehrang our immediate crowd again drew a ballroom. We had a good stove and very beautiful chandeliers. The floor made a pretty hard bed but it was far better than sleeping in the mud with the whizz bangs whistling among us.

Speaking of beds, we had a variety during this victorious hike. We often slept in hay-lofts. Some blankets spread down over the hay made a splendid bed, however, it was not convenient, in a case of that kind, to have either heat or light. Sometimes we could find a house with a spare bed in which case we would

billet ourselves and thereby save the billeting officer a little trouble.

After our rest at Ehrang we started out again on Monday, the 9th. We spent that night in a little village called Dreis. The next day we marched through Wittlich and halted in the afternoon at Dorf and Neuberg. On the evening of the 11th we arrived in Alf, which is on the river. We had been away from the Mosel since our departure from Ehrang. We only stayed in Alf overnight.

Proceeding from Alf, we passed along by the Kaiser Wilhelm's tunnel which is the longest tunnel in Europe. At Eller "F" Company halted and remained there three days, doing guard duty along the railroad.

In order to cut off about 18 kilometers everyone on foot climbed the mountain at Eller and went straightway across the ridge to Cochem, while the wagon train followed the road around the bend of the river by way of Ernst. We knew that we would be isolated from our kitchens at noontime so we carried our dinners along with us. On the ridge we stopped long enough to eat, and enjoy the beautiful panoramic view.

This ridge did not come to an abrupt crest as we had imagined but a vast plateau with fertile soil and therefore was covered with patches of grain. The view from this plateau resembles that from the edge of the Llano Estacado of Western Texas except in the latter case there are no timbered valleys to look down upon as there are along the Mosel.

On the other edge of the plateau we entered the magnificent little village of Cochem. We were ready for our journey to end there, because it was such a beautiful place, being the chief health and pleasure resort of Rhineland. With its many attractive hotels and bath houses it has a striking resemblance to Sulphur, Okla., and Hot Springs, Ark. We only stayed there long enough to find out from the organization that was stationed there that we were about 50 kilometers from Coblenz, which we thought was our destination.

We marched on up the valley—up hill all the way, until at last we came to a village called Longkarn. As most of us got billeted in good cold barns we had orders to rest there for a couple of days. The time was spent in doctoring up our feet, taking abbreviated baths

and resting up generally. About dark one night we suddenly got orders to oil our helmets. Several of us had stored our helmets away with our surplus equipment on the wagons and there was a great ruffle and shuffle getting them together again, but we "got by."

On Saturday the 14th, after having had three nights and two days of rest, we put on our packs again and started up the muddy road. We traversed some very pretty country and lots of it. We did not go the wagon road but crossed fields, forests, hills, and valleys. We climbed hills so steep that one fellow told later that we met a man going to town in a parachute. In one place we saw an open valley arena. In fact many thousand people could have assembled there and have been within easy hearing or seeing distance of a speaker or performer.

About night we arrived in Kelburg, having travelled more kilometers than we had any day before. We had gone about 33 kms. and the wagon road was about 50, so to our great discomfort the kitchens had not arrived and were not expected before eleven o'clock. We were hungry as we had walked all day with

only a light lunch, but we were so tired and sleepy that we did not like to sit up and wait. As a solution of the situation a few of us bought a lot of raw turnips from the civilians and after eating heartily went to sleep. The next day was Sunday and was duly observed as a day of rest.

On Monday the 16th we made a short hike of about 13 kms. to Dreis (the second town we had encountered with that name), Second Battalion and Headquarters staying there and the First Battalion going to Bruck, only about 2 kms. away. Dreis was the muddiest place we saw in Germany and we were doomed to stay there for awhile. We knew not how long.

We thought perhaps that we were waiting for the billeting officers and advance party to secure our billets in Coblenz. The routing party which preceded us posted signs at every crossroads showing the route we were to take. All the Division was going the same general route; however, different units would take different roads.

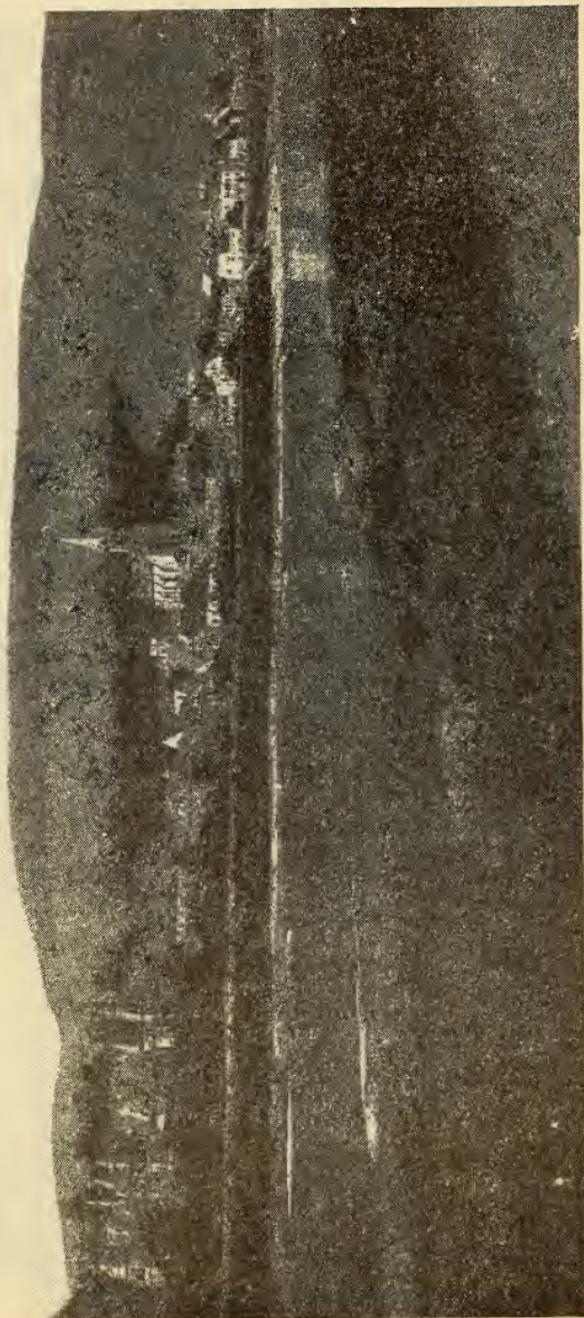
The next day the Second Battalion P. C. proceeded to Dockweiler, only about 2 kms. up the hill from Dreis. It was the terminus of the

little railroad which served that community. Soon after our arrival at Dockweiler we were joined by "F" Company which had come directly from Eller. While here we saw our first snow in Germany and it was as cold as the very mischief. We did not like the high altitude in December. Those villages had no electric lights and we longed to go on to Coblenz or back somewhere on the Mosel.

On Friday, Dec. 20th, we started out again, going back, apparently in the same general direction we had come. Like many other fool orders in the army, we could not understand it. Some thought that we had been touring these villages as a warning to the natives that we were a part of the American Army and that they must not manifest any intention of disorder. Some really thought that we were going directly home and would likely entrain at Trier as President Wilson was due there in a few days and perhaps he wanted to see us.

After going about 32 kilometers we stopped in two little villages, the names of which I have forgotten, and spent the night. The next day we went on, many falling out with sore feet from the long tiresome hike of the day before.

Lieser a. d. Mosel.



About noon we crossed our original route near Wittlich and kept on in the direction of the Mosel.

Thus we had been looping the loop for ten days, but when we reached our destination and heard the billeting officer say that he had a bed for each man in the regiment we conceived the idea that perhaps such could not have been accomplished without some difficulty and maybe it had been necessary for us to circle around a bit to find our haven of rest.

Just before night we came to Maring where the Train Company stayed and around the hill about two kilometers at Lieser the Second Battalion and Headquarters found a happy home while the First Battalion crossed the ferry to Mulheim.

Thus ended our victorious march from Stenay on the Meuse, where our last shot of the war was fired, to the heart of Rhineland which we were destined to occupy. It was 29 days since we had left Stenay. We had spent fourteen of them in actual hiking and the other fifteen in resting.

Division Headquarters was located at Berncastel-Cues only four kms. from Lieser-Mul-

heim and the other units of the division were in the surrounding territory. We spent the winter there on the beautiful Mosel and this book germinated from those many lonesome hours.

CHAPTER XV.

DIE MOSEL UND DER RHEIN.

It was indeed a beautiful country that the Ninetieth Division was called upon to occupy while awaiting the result of the peace negotiations. This picturesque Mosel Valley was the tourists' resort of Germany.

We were in one of the oldest parts of Germany. Trier and Coblenz were the chief cities near us. Both of these were built by the Romans, Trier being the original seat of government, which was later moved to Coblenz, the lawmakers, however, retaining their homes at Trier.

The American reader is familiar with Trier, or Treves, as being the rendezvous of Marshal Foch and the representatives of the so-called German Republic on several occasions to discuss the fulfilment of the armistice terms and their extension.

The city is on the Mosel River just below the mouth of the Saar, the valley of the latter, with its rich coal mines, being the subject of much controversy at the Peace Conference. The oldest building in Trier is Porta Nigra, which is the

oldest in the German Empire. There is also an old Roman Amphitheater there some fifteen hundred years old.

Trier is the central market for the chief money crop of that section—wine. It is also quite a railroad center. In size it ranks with Waco, Texas. In fact the cities are alike in several respects. The Mosel River corresponds to the Brazos and there is a wine festival each year for the purpose of promoting the wine industry which stimulates wine growing the same as the annual Cotton Palace at Waco, Texas, improves the cotton industry.

It is indeed a typical modern city. Our first entrance into the city was only a few days before Christmas and there was the usual gaiety among the moving mass of people on the streets as is manifested by American crowds during the holidays. Every man we met was dressed in good clothes, including a standing collar, real nice overcoat. Most of them carried umbrellas. There were very few scars of the war. The aeroplanes had bombed the city some but without very material damage. There was evidently no scarcity of paint in this vicinity because all the buildings looked clean and neat and well painted.

From outward appearances, one would not realize that the city had been so near the Western Front and that her "Vaterland" had been defeated in the great world war.

Coblenz is at the junction of the Mosel and the Rhine River, the city lying in the vertex of the triangle of which the respective rivers are the opposite sides. It resembles Trier in many respects. The buildings, people, customs, etc., of course, are very much the same.

The city is full of historical monuments. At the point of land where the rushing waters of the Mosel are unceasingly emptying into the Rhine is the Deutsches Eck or Statue of William I. It is over 100 feet high from the top to the base, the latter being of solid white stone. The ideal sought to be exemplified is represented by the ruler, clad as a warrior with drawn sword, seated on a powerful horse. The horse and the rider, which taken together are thirty feet high from the top of the rider's shield to the horse's hoofs, are of solid copper, the value of which was 1,900,000 marks at the time it was constructed. Although the Kaiser ordered many statues stripped for their copper, during the war, this one of his grandfather was left unmolested.

Another thing of great interest at Coblenz is the Kaiser's Castle or Stolzenfels Schloss, which means castle of proud rock. All the boys who visited Coblenz, which included the majority of the Ninetieth Division, were taken through this castle by Y. M. C. A. guides who had previously learned all the history pertaining to it and explained it in regular order as the crowd went from one gorgeous room to another.

The castle was built in the 12th century and remodeled in the 17th century. The large chambers are filled with various relics and implements of war, shrines, winter gardens, etc. There are some clocks four centuries old still keeping good time. Marble busts and portraits of various tyrants decorated almost every room. All the magnificence was supplemented by beautiful paintings and splendid works of sculpture. Kaiser Wilhelm II had spent very little time in the castle, consequently not many royal personages of the present day had had the honor of sleeping there. There had been, however, many visitors from the royalty of the world in former days and it seems that a record had been kept of each visit. Among others, one that I chanced to remember was the visit of Queen Victoria in 1846. Some of us

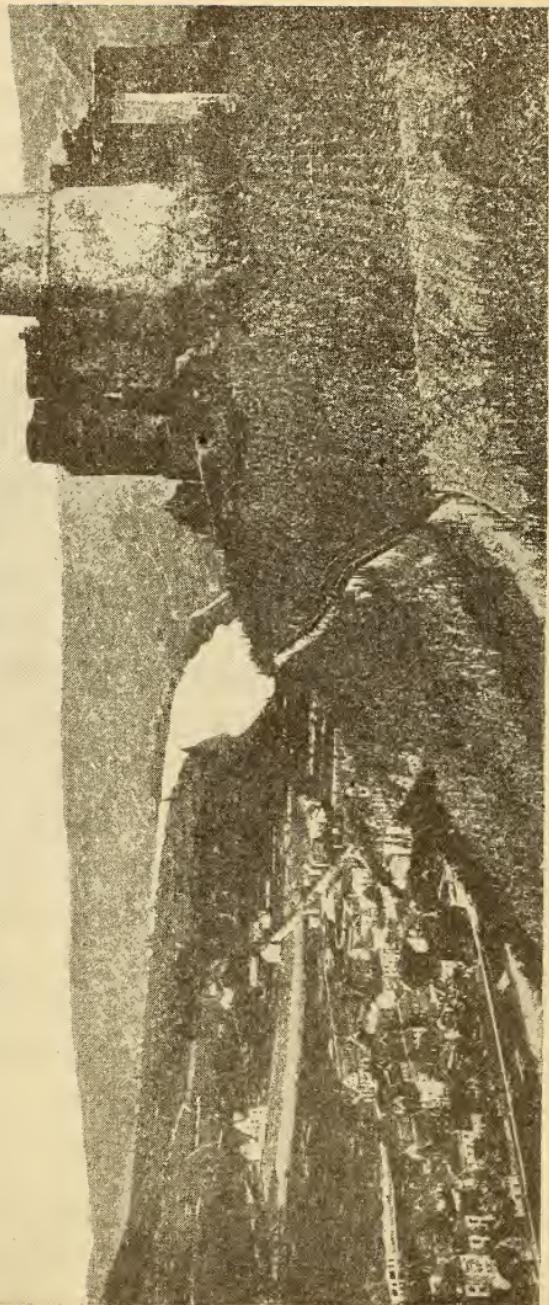
suggested that a record be made that the American soldiers of the Army of Occupation visited the place in the winter of 1918-1919. The castle was on a steep hill overlooking the Rhine and was 310 feet above the level of the river. A long winding road led the way up from the road along the river and there was a drawbridge at the entrance of the mansion which enabled the occupants to isolate themselves from the rest of the world.

Another thing worthy of mention is Fort Ehrenbreitstein just opposite Coblenz, directly across the Rhine from the mouth of the Mosel. It is the strongest fort on the Rhine and it would have required months of hard fighting to have taken it by force. It is fortunate that we marched into the place with victory already won, because with its massive walls of protection it could have stood a long siege.

Several towns along the Mosel between Coblenz and Trier of sufficient importance to deserve mention are Berncastel, Cochem, Wittlich, Lieser.

Berncastel-Cues where our Division Headquarters was located is a beautiful city of some four thousand inhabitants. An old bridge spans the Mosel and connects the two cities and they

Berncastel-Cues, Germany (Ninetieth Division Headquarters).



are often referred to as one. Overlooking the city is an old dilapidated castle formerly inhabited by Cuis in the fifteenth century. There is a legend that Lord Cuis was very active in matters of astronomy during Columbus's days and that he was very instrumental in Columbus's adventure to America. It seems very appropriate that the Americans were allotted this area in the Army of Occupation.

Cochem, as has already been referred to, is the health resort of that section of Germany and is visited by many tourists, especially during the summer. There is also a very pretty castle in Cochem where a number of American soldiers of another division were billeted.

Wittlich is some fifteen kilometers from the Mosel but is a very thriving little city. It is on the main line railroad from Trier to Coblenz. The first thing to attract one's attention on entering the city is a large white building which was a German "Krankenhaus," or hospital. The prairie country surrounds and extends to the north of Wittlich and quite a lot of grain, turnips, and potatoes are raised in the vicinity, the city being the chief market center. The headquarters

of the Seventh Army Corps was located at Wittlich.

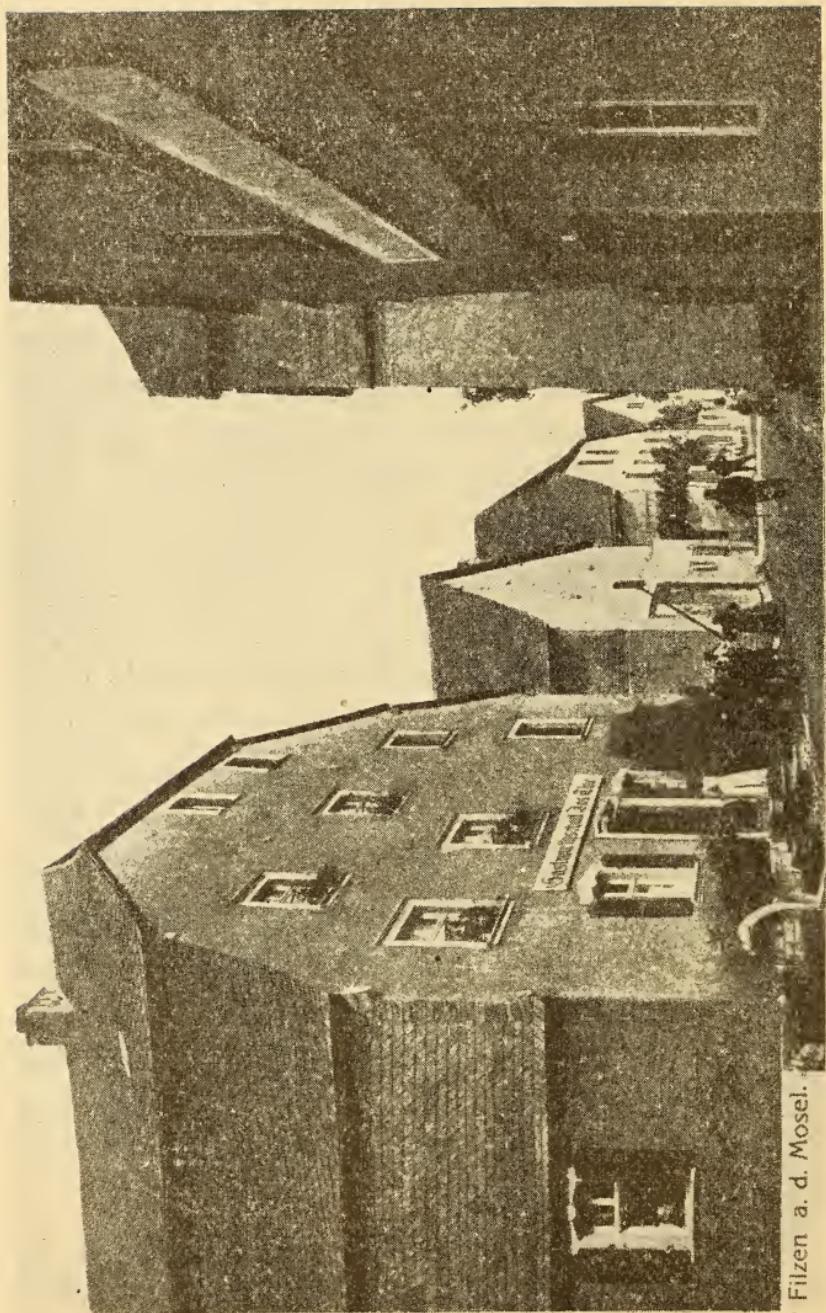
Lieser is perhaps of no more importance than several other villages along the Mosel but I mention it because of my peculiar familiarity with it, it being my home for some five months. It is at the junction of the Lieserbach and Die Mosel and is on the branch line of the railroad which runs from Wengorohr to Berncastel-Cues. The chief thing of importance is the castle of Von Schorlemer, Minister of Agriculture of Germany and a member of the Reichstag. During our sojourn there the comforts of that palatial home were enjoyed by our officers and the men connected with the officers' mess. The Kaiser had been a frequent visitor in the home and it was a great satisfaction to our officers to be in charge of the management and instruct the many maids and butler in regard to their duties.

Neither tongue nor pen can properly describe the beautiful country along "Die Mosel," as has been alluded to before. The scenery which thousands of people spend goodly sums of money each year to see and enjoy, we tired of and seemingly did not appreciate as we were so anxious to get back home and begin civil life again.

The chief crop in our immediate sector was wine. The vineyard crowned hills overlooked the swift clear waters of the river along all the latter's meanderings. Every foot of space was utilized. Hills which American farmers would condemn as worthless were used for wine growing. Some of the vineyards are on an incline of 45 degrees. That may seem absurd but ask any doughboy of the Texas-Oklahoma Division. The incline ranged from 5 to 45 degrees. Every few feet there is a layer of rock, terracing the land above. Big, little, old and young work in the vineyards and there is no distinction made with regard to sex. The laborers carry fertilizer to these vineyards by means of baskets which are strapped to their backs. In the winter time during the most inclement days the time is utilized in making strings or bands from small willow branches. These are used to train the vines about the poles to the best advantage. Later on the vines are trimmed or pruned and then tied and trained. The work is usually finished by the middle of August and harvesting begins in the latter part of September.

The small German villages resemble those in France very much but were different in some

Filzen an der Mosel, Showing Houses Three Centuries Old.



respects. As in France all the people live in villages and the house, barn, chicken house, etc., are under one roof. With these common people the parlor was usually considerably abbreviated and we often remarked that their stable was about the same distance from the dining room as the American parlors are, however, the walls were of solid stone which made a vast difference and although the cow was where our piano would be we were not bothered by her moo nor otherwise. In fact we scarcely knew that such an animal was on the place until we would see the family eating the white butter or hear the cream separator buzzing, which was quite common.

Most of the houses are more than two centuries old. At two different places where I stayed the house was built in the 17th century. None of them were less than two stories high and were usually three or four. The attic is used for fuel, hay, and general plunder. The former two are usually carried up by means of a pulley and rope on the outside.

Under each house is a wine cellar. A family of average size usually had from 18 to 24 large barrels, each of which held about 1000 litres or 225 gallons. This was the money crop. The

price of wine more than doubled from 1916 to 1918 though that was not in proportion to the prices of necessities. Wine that had been kept over two years sold for as high as 10 marks per litre and the average family raised 5000 litres. Since one mark in normal times is worth an American quarter (and the Germans still value accordingly) this 50,000 marks is seemingly a young fortune for one year's crop, however, as living necessities are tenfold higher than in America, it is comparatively small for one family which in Germany consists of more than merely a husband and wife and poodle dog, pet monkey, or Maltese cat.

The chief domestic animal in Rhineland is the cow. In addition to furnishing the milk and butter for the family the cow is the chief draught animal. Mules are not to be found and horses are scarce. Most of the steers were used for meat during the war and the milch cows are rather poor yet as they were denied their required forage which was fed to the horses and mules in the army. It is a very common sight to see a man coming down the street, walking beside the rude wagon drawn by two faithful milch cows. The harness is rather abbreviated, consisting merely

of a padded belt over the horns and trace chains. The cows are guided by an occasional growl of Deutsch "lingo," which is often accompanied by a stroke or motion of the whip usually carried by the driver. Thus the chief means of conveyance are the milch cows and the rude wagons. Sometimes if the family is fortunate enough to have a horse, they have a surrey, which has a capacity of about four persons. There is usually a bicycle in the family. Automobiles are a luxury. This is accountable partly because the winding roads do not afford as good haven of joyriding as in America but the chief reason seems to be that the customs are a decade or more behind time. Excepting the traffic of the American Army one would see an auto about as often as we did in the U. S. A. ten or twelve years ago.

Rations in Rhineland were scarce as compared with the U. S. A. Potatoes were the chief edible. Turnips were raised in abundance but a large per cent of them was used to feed the cows and swine. Good flour was not to be had during the war but while we were there a marked improvement was noticeable in flour as well as everything else. The bread was black, the original war bread was made of potato flour, sawdust, and the

sweepings of flour mills. Each family usually cooks enough at one time to last two or three weeks, there usually being a large furnace and oven in the wall exclusively for that purpose. Biscuits were unknown; however, waffles were made quite often, especially whenever a family was fortunate enough to have some of the best flour. In some instances no bread whatever was served with meals, baked potatoes being the apparent substitute. Parched rye is used for coffee and quite a lot is consumed. The black bread smeared with butter and the "coffee" is the usual breakfast. The table is never spread for that meal and none of the family eat at the same time.

Small patches of wheat, oats, and corn are raised on the little prairie hills, but, of course, immediately on the Mosel nothing but grapes are raised. The rude mills which make the meal or flour are always located near a swift stream and run by water power. Besides being used for flour the wheat is also used for a table dish by boiling. This makes it very much like our oatmeal and with plenty of milk it is naturally a very nutritious food.

Although people who do so much manual labor as these folks do require a great deal of meat.

hog meat was not to be had during the war. I did not make sufficient inquiry to ascertain whether this was due to scarcity of hog feed and no meat was produced or whether the Government seized what was produced. Since the war they have some hog meat. Milk and butter are plentiful and aid materially in reducing the cost of living.

During the war there was no chocolate nor cocoa, and the people had scarcely tasted either for four years. It was indeed a treat to them when some soldier would purchase a bar of chocolate or a can of cocoa for them at the army canteen.

The Germans also had been compelled to use very poor tobacco which was mostly leaves of something else and they certainly did appreciate Prince Albert and Camel cigarettes.

The German Government controlled the food situation during the war and it affected some commodities to the extent that total abstinence was observed to the nth degree. Frequent inspections were made of each family cupboard and whatever the Kaiser's police wanted they took, usually paying for it, however. The demand for some things was so

great that one could often sell to individuals for two or three times as much as the government paid and that caused lots of smuggling and concealments. Ofttimes a family would be required to have on hand a certain quantity of a certain commodity at a certain date and when the food inspectors would call for it they usually placed some one in jail if the orders had not been obeyed. This applied not merely to food products alone but to horses, cows, hogs, etc., and in fact everything that the government could use, which, of course, covered a wide field.

During our sojourn on the Mosel I had occasion one afternoon to observe two civil police searching a man's premises for some suspected surplus potatoes, or "kartoffeln," which were finally found. The man had not given up as many potatoes as his neighbors and the authorities suspected him. The potatoes are usually kept under the huge cellar under the house and the man had far below the normal quantity there. The police found a suspicious looking pile of rubbish in an old shed and after digging into it they discovered the coveted potatoes. The man would yell and

cry at them but he could not interfere as he was safely handcuffed. I was billeted in a house not far away and upon hearing the yelling I hastened to the scene. The police, arrayed in their gold-trimmed uniforms, which at first impression I thought must have been some that the Kaiser had abandoned in his hasty retreat, were apparently exercising their authority. One of them asked me if I could speak German. I told him that I could not but that we had an interpreter in town who could. I could understand enough to know what the trouble was but I could not see why they wanted an American soldier who could speak "Deutsch." Finally they made me understand that it was not they but the prisoner who wanted an American soldier. Perhaps he thought that as we had been bossing those little towns in some respects, that we would intercede in his behalf and defy the authority of the German civil police and that the latter would yield to our orders.

I did not go for the interpreter as I preferred not to become entangled in their difficulty in any way. The police soon left him in his

storm of anger and said that they would call the next day for their share of the potatoes.

The food was rationed during the war. In fact there was a limit placed on all necessities. One had to have a ticket for everything—sugar, meal, bread, coffee, shoes, clothing, etc. The prices of all these became exorbitant, sometimes being tenfold what they were before the war. A \$50 suit of clothes cost 2,000 marks which is about \$500 at the normal rate of exchange, but was less than \$200 while we were there.

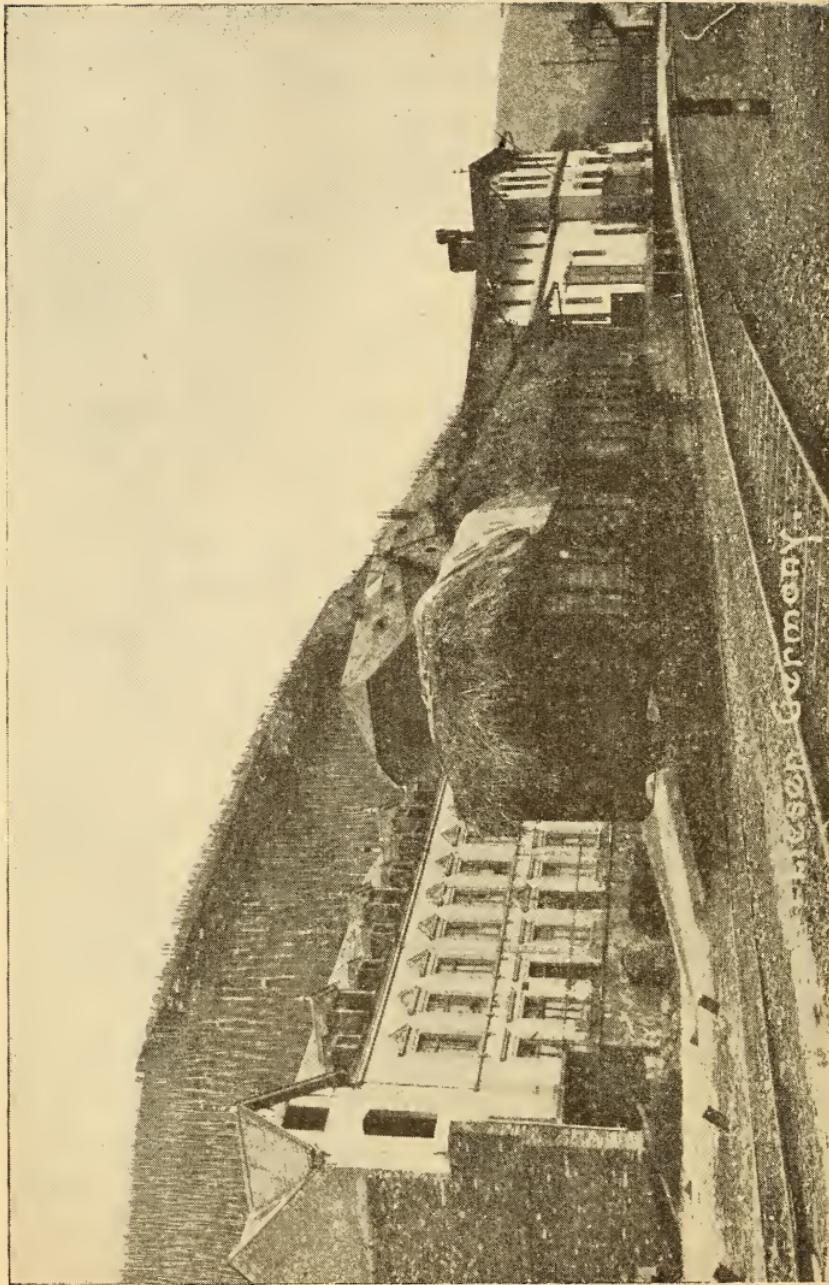
The food situation in our part of Germany was not so bad as some of us had been inclined to believe. However, it was far worse than our own. Even our army kitchens afforded better eats than the average German table. We were told that in normal times there were enough hogs raised for home consumption. Of course, most of the hogs were raised upon the prairie where abundance of feed could be raised.

Many of the little villages along the Mosel had a companion village on the opposite side. These were connected together by a simple ferry, there being a small boat for passengers

only and a large boat for vehicles. The stream was very swift and all the boats were attached to a cable. The small boat had a rudder which would adjust the boat so that the front would be diagonally up the stream, thus the current would strike the boat diagonally, and because of the resistance offered by the connection of the cable the resultant force would be in the direction at right angles to the current or directly across the stream.

The large ferry boats for wagons, etc., had no rudder but the large connecting wire branched in two and extended to each end of the boat. These respective wires could be either tightened or relaxed and thus be adjusted as the situation demanded. The current was exceedingly swift and the wires would break if they were not real strong. On one occasion we saw one of the large boats going swiftly down stream carrying a wagon laden with potatoes, hay, etc.

The railroads which we found in our section of Germany were very much like those we had seen in France. All the trains were small and their accommodations meagre. The tracks were of light steel and the roadbed was usually



Depot at Lieser, Showing Vineyards in the Background.

rather poor, the crossties being very old and rotten. We saw a wreck one evening where the rails had spread and not a solid tie was to be found for a distance of two hundred yards.

The most puzzling and noticeable thing about the railroads is the vast difference expended on the roadbeds as compared to that used in the large strong bridges and depots. Almost all the stations that are junctions have large underground passageways, the building of which necessitates a great amount of labor and expense. Likewise there are very few surface crossings, the railroad usually being over the surface road.

The railroad coaches, though small, are built on the order of our American cars so that you can walk through from one end to the other. There is also a heating process which can easily be adjusted to suit the occasion. Perhaps the reason that the roadbeds are no more solid and the cars no larger is because the country is so close together that no better service is needed.

Every family in the Mosel valley is within three hours ride of either Trier or Coblenz and with two or three trains each way per day no

large express trains are needed. The main line from Trier to Coblenz runs directly across the country while another road called the Moseltalbahn follows the many meanderings of the river to Alf-Bullay where it joins the former.

It seems like toyland to see the little trains creeping along by the side of the river and hear the engine's shrill whistle. The majority of the passengers ride in the third-class coaches which have no cushions or seats. Whoever gets a seat first generally keeps it, regardless of how many women and children are standing. Anyone travelling must keep on the lookout for the desired destination or be real familiar with the country because no stations are called and one must depend on seeing the sign at the station.

The political subdivision corresponding to our county is the "Kreis" and the smaller ones like our precincts are Burgemeisterei. The latter usually includes five or six little villages. In each village there is a secretary of the Burgemeister and he makes his circuit. At each block he stops, rings his bell, and makes his announcements while the people flock around to

listen. Everything of local interest is announced through the Burgemeister or his secretaries. Those who are in any trouble or perplexity may appeal to the secretaries for relief.

The daily life of those German people is rather simple. Every member of the family works hard. It is quite common to see an old woman or a girl carrying water and scrubbing the street in front of the house at 10 o'clock at night. The cultivation of the vineyards requires an immense amount of work and every member of the family participates. On Saturdays, however, the girls usually remain at home to scrub the floors, bake bread, etc., so that everything will be spic and span for Sunday.

Those Germans are strong on gossip. People who think that we Americans are "gossips" do not know the ways of the world. We don't know the first principle. Even our army gossip does not equal that of those small German villages. Anything that happened even among us was known by all the natives before all of us knew it.

Some of our boys were washing an escort wagon in the edge of the river. It rolled out a

little too far and soon was gone down stream and within three minutes every inhabitant of the town was laughing about it.

In the latter part of January the civilians somehow got the news that we would leave the first week in February, while we were perfectly ignorant of when we were expected to leave. The local rumors failed to materialize. A few days after we were supposed to leave I asked some fellow what was the news and he replied, "We left here day before yesterday."

Most of the German men smoke long pipes made of cherry or applewood. The larger pipes have porcelain bowls. Most of the boys smoke cigarettes. All drink wine and beer and occasionally schnapps, although all are very temperate in drinking the latter.

Each family retains enough wine in its cellar for home use. The beer is usually procured at the "Gasthaus" which is to be found in every village. It is manufactured in the large cities. Some is made of hops and some from sugar beets. The beer they had while we were there was very weak, but they told us that before "dem Krieg" the beer was very good. Schnapps resembles our alcohol. Some

is made from grain and some is made from the residue of grapes after the wine making process.

The Germans, like the French in one respect, seldom drink to excess. In the wine room or Gasthaus they smoke their pipes or cigarettes and sip their wine or beer at leisure, while they laugh and talk or play cards. They think it strange that prohibition is agitated in some countries; however, if they had as large a country as ours filled with every variety and blend of nationality that survived the flood they would, no doubt, appreciate our situation.

The dress of those village people is hardly as good as the average American farmer. Patched trousers are often worn on Sunday. Most of the German soldiers of that section who survived the war automatically demobilized themselves as they went back toward the Rhine and they used their army uniforms for everyday wear, though sometimes having a different headdress. Most every boy had a pair of knee length boots which had been worn in the trenches. In the winter time those heavy greenish overcoats which donned our enemy as they occupied the various lines and front, were quite commonly seen. Wrap leg-

gins like we wore, only green instead of O. D., were quite commonly worn by those who did not have the boots. All of the everyday shoes were reinforced with hobnails the same as our army shoes. Some member of each family usually polished all the shoes on Saturday. Boys ten years old and past wear long trousers and standing collars. The fad of wearing the soft negligee collars like ours is growing quite popular. On all special occasions, especially weddings (heirats), there is quite a display of fine clothes, costumes, flowers and palms. Abundance of the two latter can always be found in the gardens of the nicest homes and great pains is taken in their cultivation.

For amusements the people indulge in simple indoor games such as cards and checkers. The children play ball and marbles. The balls are of yarn but great interest was manifested in our national game whenever we were tossing the regulation baseball. The children attain very high efficiency in juggling. It was quite common to see a little chap tossing four or five balls at a time. All the boys large enough to swim take delight in exploring the river in the summer time.

Singing, dancing, fishing, and rowing are the chief pastimes of the grownup set. They are all lovers of music and take great pains in learning to sing. Our infirmary at Lieser had formerly been a music school room. There was an organ there and the church choir practised there about twice each week for awhile. The patience they exercised was remarkable. At the first effort at a song the voices would be very squeaky in reaching the higher notes, but after they had sung it over and over and over, oftentimes to our great discomfort, all the notes would be made perfectly clear. They would not quit a song until they had conquered all their errors. Pianos were to be found only in the most well-to-do homes, but quite a number of the homes had zithers, mandolins, guitars, violins and cornets.

Sundays are spent in going to church, visiting, and congregating along the streets to exchange gossip. All of the streets are of rock or at least a solid surface and anyone attempting to sneak out of town can easily be detected and the news is soon scattered.

The prevailing religion is Catholic, although there are quite a few Protestants. At Mul-

heim, just opposite Lieser, there was a large Protestant Church and the members from the nearby villages attend every Sunday.

So much for those people and customs of the Mosel Valley as they existed during our sojourn there. The next chapter will be devoted to our own life while there and our relations with those people.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION.

Our Division contained men from almost every part of the globe. Apparently every state of the union was represented. I met men from half of the United States, Alaska, England, Sweden, Belgium, France, Italy, Denmark, Holland, Mexico, Canada and Germany.

One time a crowd of us was discussing the variety. I remarked that one fellow in our regiment said that we passed within ten kilometers of his birthplace near Trier. Another fellow spoke up, "I was born in Holland. The rest of the family live there yet. I could go back to the old home in six hours if I had a pass."

A very close friend of mine was of German descent, his paternal grandparents having migrated from Germany. There was a village on the Mosel not far from us of the same name. We teased him a great deal about being a German spy, our enemy, etc.

Our division had been completed from the April contingent of Camp Dodge, Iowa, draft-

ees, most of whom were from Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois. Many of these were of German descent and could speak German. With their assistance we could converse with our new neighbors a great deal better than we had been able to in France.

During our first few weeks in Germany most of us who could not speak the language did not try to learn much of it, because we thought that we would stay only a short time and we did not think it worth while to learn a language which had become so unpopular in the United States. However, as time rolled on we became more interested in German and we soon learned to say even more than "Ja," "Danke sehr," and "Bitte sehr." One fellow said that he learned eleven words quite easily. He said that he could count to ten and say "Ja."

When we located in the vicinity of Berncastel, little did we think that we would be there until the following May. We had many and varied opinions, as usual, as to how long we would stay in the Mosel country. Very few thought that drafted men would be kept in Germany even until peace was signed and

even the Big Four thought that peace would be a reality in April.

The first few weeks we spent in Rhineland we enjoyed some good rest. Each man had a good bed to sleep in and as the nights were long we could get plenty of sleep even before reveille. Our little detachment stood reveille a few times until our captain moved to the castle where he slept so soundly within its massive walls that the bugle calls could not awaken him and that marked the finale of our reveille. We regretted this very much (???), but owing to the perseverance which we had developed in the trenches we could endure almost anything, so we did not complain.

If there was ever any period in American or German history that any part of Germany was Americanized it was during the days that the American Armies occupied the Mosel and Rhine country.

When we first arrived in German territory we were really surprised at the kind treatment accorded us. We were warned by general orders not to comment on that fact in writing back to the States, as it might cause the promotion of undue sympathy for the

enemy. Although the kind treatment was apparently sincere there was a high probability that the majority of it was camouflage and propaganda because the Germans knew that President Wilson would be a big man at the peace table and if they wanted any pie there they must try to win sympathy and friendship from the boys who had made an early peace possible.

It seemed so odd to be in the army and be living in a German home, oftentimes occupying a room of a German soldier who had been killed in the war. Technically speaking, those families were still our enemies even though all hostilities had ceased. We were forbidden to fraternize with those people, presumptively, for the same reason that we were not allowed to write home about the kind treatment. Do you suppose that this order was complied with? Take the case of the Sammy who had been in the army from 8 months to 2 years, has had no comforts of home life, had lived in the rain, mud, shells, gas, etc., with his life and health imperiled at all times and has been rationed on corn beef, hard tack and coffee and is 6000 miles away from home with no assurance of just when he will get back. Would

you think for one minute that he would refuse a glass of wine, a pitcher of hot milk, a plate of hot waffles or a few good apples? What would a man of ordinary prudence have done under the same or similar circumstances?

We acted exactly as the ordinarily prudent man would have. No army order was ever violated any more than that one; however, flagrant violations were not tolerated for a long time. On one occasion after a heavy snow some fraulein propelled a snowball in the direction of a certain soldier which made salvage of a ten dollar pair of spectacles and within two hours an order came out to the effect that snowballing had been construed as fraternizing and it would not be indulged thereafter and so on, etc. During our last days there, however, the fraternization rules were somewhat relaxed and the homesick soldiers allowed more liberty. The authorities evidently realized that we merely wanted some of the home comforts which we had been accustomed to in civilian life and that we were on our guard at all times for any insincere

courtesies which might be shown us solely for the purpose of gaining friendship.

We gradually became adapted to the environment of our new home. A soldier would refer to "my room" with the same air of freedom as if he had one of the best rooms in a good hotel. It was no longer "my bunk." The term "at the house" was substituted for "at the barrack" or "at the billet."

We were really in billets but we drew a distinction in living in haylofts or on the floor of a vacant house and in living in good warm rooms with three or four feather mattresses on each bed and for fear of the former construction we avoided referring to "billets."

The country we were occupying was being Americanized. The Stars and Stripes were flying throughout our area. The American Army was boss. We were running the railroads and the civilians had to have a pass to ride. There was a sawmill at Berncastel-Cues and whenever lumber was needed at any place the engineers would have it shipped out. As Lieser was the chief home of the "builder" that place became a veritable lumber yard. The Kaiser and his subjects who had caused us

so much trouble would have to foot the bill, so we should worry.

When the "Star Spangled Banner" was being played Mr. Dutchman had to stop his rumbling wagon in the street and stand stock still until the last note echoed from the stone buildings. When any of the civilians passed by "Old Glory" they had to take off their hats and remove their long-stemmed pipe or cigarette from their mouths. Some of them disliked this but we kept a guard on the job to see that the flag which we had carried to victory with pride and honor was not to be disrespected by those to whom we were returning good for evil.

In addition to these compulsory matters, many of our ideals were adopted by the Germans voluntarily. Any nationality is more or less partial to their own ways but the German is considered an extreme in that respect; however, in spite of that the people took a noticeable interest in the English language. Some attribute that to Germany's desire to dominate the world commerce, but whatever is their motive a goodly per cent of them can speak a little English.

As to pastimes, the Germans soon adopted the U. S. playing cards of fifty-three to a deck in preference to theirs of thirty-three. Solitaire and casino were substituted for "solo" and "sixty-six."

Cigarettes and tobacco made in the "Vaterland" were sidetracked for those made from the native weed from Virginia, Kentucky and North Carolina.

Among their music there were many selections of American origin. I was in the home of a music teacher a few times. He was the organist at the church in the little village. He had an extensive collection of classical music and songs. Most of the latter had the corresponding English words under the German.

The Germans were greatly impressed with the wealth of the American people. They expressed surprise and apparent admiration when we would tell them of the cheap \$10,000 insurance which almost every soldier carried, the allotments for dependent members of the family, the vast fortunes reaped by the Government by means of the income and excess profits taxes, the over-subscriptions of all the

Liberty Loans and the amounts raised by the sale of War Savings Certificates.

The vast contributions of money to the Red Cross and the other welfare organizations convinced them that the United States was indeed a land of dollars but the fact that those contributions had been made so liberally, exploded the absurd doctrine taught them by the junkers that the Americans worshipped only gold and cared for neither honor nor humanity.

As a rule, everything went along very smoothly between the ex-German soldiers and the nephews of Uncle Sam. There were rare cases in which both would be in the wrong and have a trivial difficulty. We usually avoided any reference as to who was right in the war or who was wrong; however, if any reference was made of our being in the war we stood firm in our condemnation of the Kaiser and the submarines.

On one occasion a German was complaining to me of the heavy taxes and the burdens which were being placed upon them by the peace adjusters. I merely told him that wars were very expensive and that as the Kaiser

started the war the people of Germany must pay the bill. I also told him that Rhineland was in much better condition than Belgium or Northern France because the Belgians and French had to rebuild their homes. I did not emphasize my disapproval of the pillaging of the German soldiers, but he surely took the hint.

The harmony which existed between us and the inhabitants of Rhineland can be largely attributed to the average good conduct of the American soldier. The record made by the Sammy in the World War is such that even remote posterity will point to it with pride.

The American soldier is brave, courageous, generous, honorable and unselfish. Tired, hungry, sleepy and perhaps wounded and bleeding, he will rush into almost certain death if there is anything to be gained for his country. He will share his last bite of reserve ration or last drop of water with his comrade. In the hospitals there were many cases where a patient would request the doctors to attend others first, stating that he could wait.

There are some habits indulged in by a majority of the soldiers which do not meet gen-

eral approval. Most of the soldiers smoke cigarettes. There is so much lonesomeness connected with the soldier's life that he naturally becomes a smoker. Cigarettes are preferred because they are more convenient. Cigars can scarcely be obtained and are too expensive while a pipe and the accompanying tobacco requires too much pocket space in the army uniform. The majority of army smokers do not inhale the smoke, consequently there is not as much damage done to their health as some people think.

The majority of the soldiers swear, not intentionally but carelessly. Swearing reached its climax just prior to the signing of the armistice, when even the pulpit and the stage were searching the profane vocabulary for appropriate adjectives for the Kaiser. Therefore it seems that if the soldiers will now abstain from further swearing they will surely get forgiveness.

Another bad habit is gambling. It is made a penalty by almost all the states. But no such evils result from gambling in the army as is the case in civilian life, because in the former the soldier has his actual necessities of

life furnished him and whenever he loses he has lost only his surplus and is not driven to despondency and dishonesty. Furthermore, very few soldiers neglect their duty for any kind of gambling. Gambling is usually resorted to in the absence of more wholesome pastimes. Whenever good reading rooms, etc., were accessible there was not so much gambling.

In the German homes Sammy was polite and courteous as he would have been in a strange home in his native land. What a marked contrast in that conduct and that of the Germans in Belgium and France.

In spite of the fact that the Germans thought that their Deutschland was the best place in the world and that they were the smartest people, the conduct of the American doughboy won a place in the hearts of the natives of Rhineland that will be an important factor in the barriers against a repetition of the world slaughter.

CHAPTER XVII.

WATCHFUL WAITING.

Those who condemned “watchful waiting” so severely during our international crises with Mexico in 1914 and with the Imperial German Government over the Lusitania affair in 1915, little dreamed that within four years the American soldier would be confronted with a situation which would necessitate the exercise of more patience than any indulged in during the exchange of notes with Carranza and Von Bernstorff.

Many felt that as we had done our share of fighting at St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne and had fired one of the last shots of the war that we ought to be allowed to go back to the best country in the world.

Various interpretations of the Selective Service Act were discussed pro and con by all the men. Some said that since Wilson had declared that the signing of the armistice ended the war that we could not be held in Germany any longer. Others exposed the absurdity of that theory by saying that it was being done.

We began our task as usual—in suspense. We

had no idea of how long we would constitute the new "Watch on the Rhine." Very few thought that we would be detained so long as we really were. The majority of the higher officials who understood military matters better than the men really thought that we would walk up the gang plank a great deal sooner than we did.

In spite of the discontent, however, there was another phase of the situation which afforded a great deal of consolation. True enough, we had fought a hard fight but for that very reason we should be willing to spend a few months guarding the west bank of the Rhine in order to reap the fruits of the victory for which we had paid so dearly.

The impatient, or at least the more impatient, argued that as we had fought so hard we should be relieved of the Army of Occupation. In reply to that those with the broader view argued back: Would it not be a stinging rebuke to the honor of Belgium, the bravery of Briton, the courage of France and the noble souls of the innumerable hosts who had made the supreme sacrifice, for us to complain of being in our present situation for a few months? If we were to make impossible the repetition of those awful crimes committed

by the enemy which had horrified the world, was it not necessary that we remain on the job a while longer?

Think of how much worse it could have been. Less than one year before the waves of Germans went surging through the Allies' lines at St. Quentin, threatening the great French capital every moment. At that time the Allied side looked so gloomy that we could scarcely predict final victory within two or three years. Men leaving the United States those days had faint hopes of returning before 1920 if ever. Think of how much worse it could have been.

Were not all of us unhurt physically? Were not all who were able to be in the victorious armies in Rhineland free from gas-poisoned lungs and serious scars of war which so many of our comrades would carry to their graves? Were we not living in good, warm, comfortable houses, sleeping in nice soft beds and enjoying the best meals we had had since the beginning of our army career, instead of living in shell holes in the mud and rain with the whizz bangs and air bombs playing their melancholy tunes around us while we ate slumgullion, hard tack, corned beef, etc.?

What if the latter were yet our living conditions, with no prospects of an end in sight?

Oh humankind! Are we never contented? Instead of bemoaning our fate should we not be thankful for our good fortune? Many of us soothed our impatience with those thoughts and let the time pass on.

Soon after our arrival in Lieser we experienced a novelty—spending Christmas in a foreign land. We had a far better Christmas than we had expected when we set out across the great whale pasture filled with treacherous submarines. We enjoyed a good dinner at our kitchens which was supplemented with our Christmas packages from the folks at home and those given us directly by the Y. M. C. A. Throughout the holiday week we fared sumptuously on cakes, wine, hot chocolate and coffee. Chocolate was a rarity for the Germans and they were more than willing to cook it if we could furnish it.

The higher army officials realized that it was going to be a problem to keep the homesick men contented and they began to promote various schemes and schedules that would alleviate our impatience. All organizations were culled for theatrical talent, baseball players, football stars,

etc., and a good program was soon moving along splendidly.

Our regiment at Lieser took charge of the auditorium and christened it "Liberty Hall." Under that roof we spent many pleasant hours. Great lecturers of American fame visited the hall and they usually blended their discourse with compliments to our division which we took for the truth and not mere flattery. The entertainment branch of the Y. M. C. A. lost no time. Talented artists, musicians and readers gave us high class programs.

The various units of the division organized shows and toured the country. Some very good talent was drafted from the ranks. Many of the men had been professionals. Some made splendid camouflaged girls. Each show refrained from duplicating any part of another's program so far as consistent with its peculiar talent. Sometimes there would be a show in a village every night in the week each one having something new. Each show was furnished a motor truck in which to travel from place to place and its personnel were excused from all other duties.

These show patriots met with a great many difficulties. Costumes were scarce, stage space

was limited and the scenery none too elaborate and various other essential facilities were lacking, however, the little auditoriums were always crowded to their full capacity and we were well nigh ready to leave for home before the Doughboy Minstrels and Whizz Bang Follies began to lose their charm.

Baseball teams were organized and toured the country, affording enthusiastic fans the pleasure of enjoying many spectacular games. Football and basketball pursued a similar course. All kinds of athletics were indulged in and encouraged. Boxing and wrestling were by no means neglected. In some instances good boxers and wrestlers progressed from the Army of Occupation to the large French cities, particularly Paris. Horse shows were a great attraction. We had a splendid ground for horse shows at Berncastel and some real interesting feats in horsemanship were witnessed.

About the first of February we began to get passes to Coblenz. It was generally understood that every man in the division would be allowed this opportunity and that the acceptance of the trip would not affect our right to a leave elsewhere. The pass lasted 72 hours but we were

supposed to be away only two nights unless detained by a belated train or some similar hindrance. Of course our railroad fare was free.

As Uncle and his nephews were running the railroads, we didn't have to put out any Marks, Francs, Toms nor Alecs to ride. We had to change at Wengorohr and the entire running time to Coblenz including the time waiting for connections was about four hours.

Several of us went to Coblenz on Lincoln's Birthday and returned the night of the 15th. On arrival there we were taken to a good barracks where each of us was assigned to a good cot and we were then issued meal tickets which enabled us to get our meals at one of the best cafes in the city. We had German waiters. The cafe had been closed to the public and was now operated exclusively for soldiers on leave. These meals and beds were free the same as our railroad fare.

We found "Old Glory" waving on all the Government buildings and hotels which were the various branches of the Third Army Headquarters. The Red Cross, Knights of Columbus, Jewish Welfare Board and the Y. M. C. A. were established in splendid quarters, the latter having taken over the festival hall or "Festhalle."

The Festhalle was the chief rendezvous for the leave soldiers. There was a canteen, reading room, recreation room and auditorium. The latter could be converted into a dance hall by simply removing the chairs as the chairs were graduated in height and the floor perfectly level. A German orchestra played there nearly all the time and there was a splendid show every night. The trips to Fort Ehrenbreitstein started from the "Y" with an able guide. At nights hot chocolate was served free. Ofttimes there would be a dance in the auditorium after the show. There was a baggage room where our overcoats and musette bags were checked free.

We were scheduled to take a boat trip up the Rhine on our second day in Coblenz but owing to there being so much ice in the river the trip had to be abandoned. However, we went aboard the ship and had lunch but we missed seeing many more old castles along the banks of the historic Rhine. I have already referred to some of the important sights we saw in a previous chapter. We were well entertained the entire time we were there.

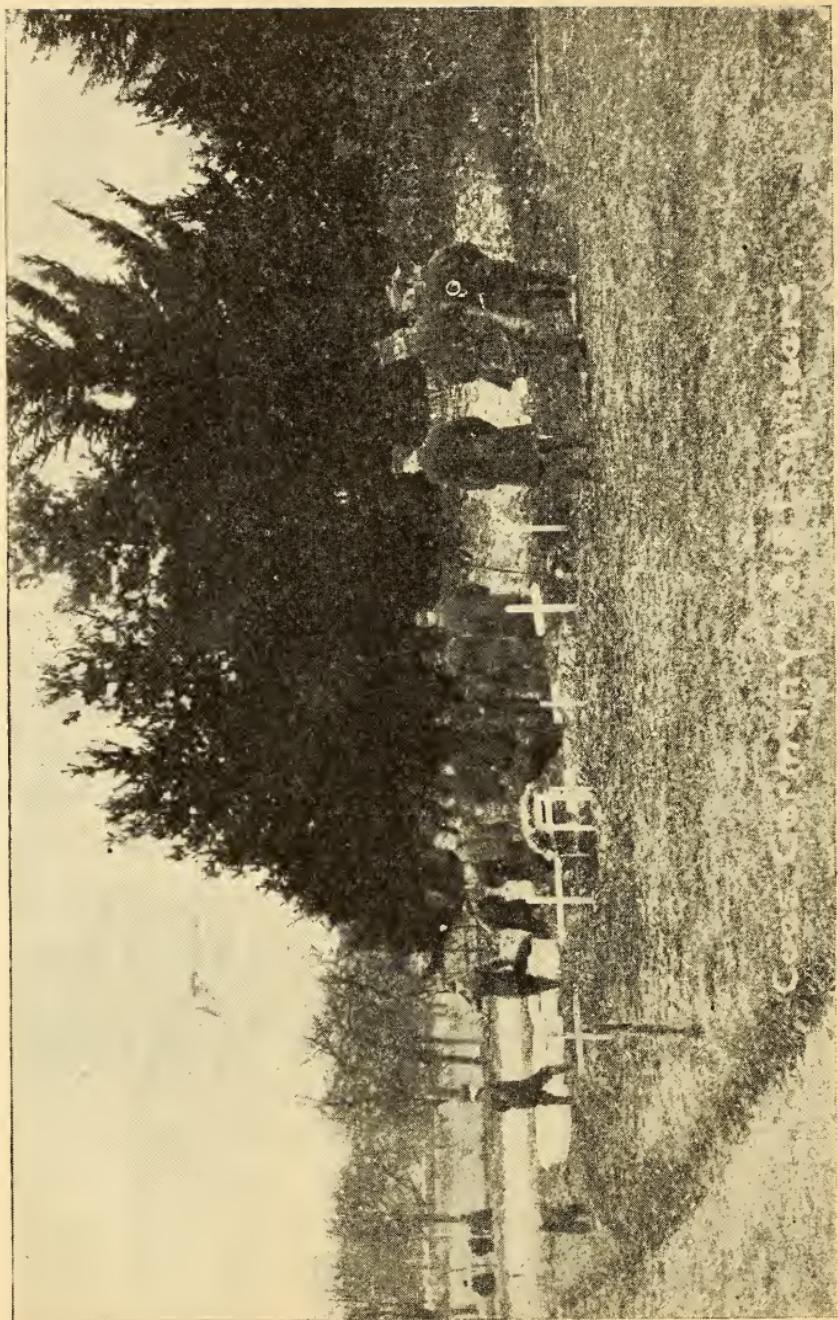
Time rolled on. True enough our regiment spent most of its time at "leisure" as well as at

Lieser. With the exception of a little guard duty, ration transportation, battalion reviews, etc., we did very little the first two months. In fact we had scarcely begun our new duties in Rhineland before we were termed the Army of (No) Occupation. Later, however, when the weather was not too inclement some drilling and target practice was indulged in.

Our regiment allowed passes to Trier, spasmodically from January until we left for the port of embarkation. This opportunity of seeing the oldest city in Germany appealed very strongly to many of the men and each organization had no trouble in finding its quota allowed to go. We had hardly appreciated Trier when we came through it because marching at "attention" with a pack on your back for two hours is not the ideal way to enjoy metropolitanosophy. Personally, I did not take the regular Trier pass as I was waiting for the muchly coveted Paris leave.

Athletics, shows, and vacations were not enough. The Army of Occupation was to have an educational program, so said G. H. Q. Regimental schools were at once organized and all who cared to could attend. This was a very favorable device for the buck privates who hap-

Cues, Germany, Where Some of Our Boys Were Laid to Rest.



pened to be teachers to get revenge on some of the top sergeants. Later on our regiment was allowed a certain quota to attend British and French universities under the detached service plan. Our regiment was allowed to send only one to England which was our devoted chaplain. We were glad for his sake that he was to have the opportunity to see beautiful England again but we regretted very much to see him leave. He was indeed the first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of the boys. In many instances he had paid a last tribute to our dead comrades and had rendered assistance to the dying ones while the shells were still playing their deathly tune.

Some went to corps school. Others to divisional schools which taught general subjects. There were also special vocational schools which were filled to their capacity.

About the middle of February, after having had a few cases of the flu, some of which were fatal—our regiment split up and moved to various parts of the divisional area to work on the roads. We were the engineers. We had boasted of how we had built roads and bridges under shell fire and said that we could build anything that could be built, so now why not try our hand at repairing

the roads where the shells had ceased to sing? Our heavy traffic had been very wearing on the roads and if we wanted all of that ham, chocolate, etc., which we read of so much, was it not our duty to work the roads a bit? Another thing, if we were going to "settle" in Rhineland, why not be industrious citizens instead of duty dodgers all of our lives?

Our Second Battalion scattered up and down the river, not far from Lieser, while the First Battalion went up on the cold prairie in the vicinity of Daun. Marked improvement in the roads was soon noticeable. Our platoons and squads were multiplied by the assistance of the German civilians. Our privates were made acting corporals each in charge of a bunch of Dutchmen as they would "arbeit an der Strasse." Thus about three months of our watchful waiting was spent in work.

Although we were none too pleased at the thought that we would have to work a while, most of us found good locations and lived at ease. In many instances only a single platoon was in a village and each man had a room to himself. We were thereby able to enjoy the modicum of privacy which we had so often longed for.

The Kaiser's hunting grounds were in the vicinity of Lieser and there were a few violations of the order prohibiting the shooting of his deer. However, the offenders were seldom caught. On one occasion some game wardens or inspectors found venison in one of our platoon kitchens and a tedious explanation was in order. The cooks declared that a passing truck threw the venison off and they did not know who it was. This sounded rather mysterious but all efforts to gain more definite information were futile.

Wild hogs, also, were often victims of the rifle from Camp Travis; however, one kitchen force explained that seven of the beasts were accidentally killed by a moving truck and that they were immediately dressed to prevent waste.

During these days that we were located in these many little villages we lived at ease and had plenty to eat. We would attend the aforesaid shows in the old army trucks, many of which the Kaiser had formerly called his, and would go rumbling, with childish delight, over the roads where the Kaiser had often gone horseback riding when visiting Baron von Schorlemer.

About the latter part of February, out of a clear sky, came the thundering news that the

Ninetieth Division would sail in June. This stunned the majority of us because a few weeks prior we had gotten reliable news from Coblenz that we would go home via the Rhine and Rotterdam, and "tout de suite" too. However, the dope that we'd sail in June was not mere gossip but was a divisional Memo.

Regimental gossip took a severe slump. In fact it died out completely for a few weeks. There was no foundation or morale on which to build any rumors. The only consolation was that our suspense was relieved.

CHAPTER XVIII.

VACATION DAYS.

Simultaneously with the definite announcement that we would not leave Germany very soon, furloughs were granted more liberally. For special reasons one could go to Belgium or any of the Big Four except the United States. There were splendid leave areas in the most attractive parts of France maintained for the sole benefit of leave soldiers. At all times during the remainder of our stay in Rhineland some of our regiment were off on vacations. To us it meant so much and covered such a wide field that I deem it proper to devote this chapter to it.

During those long days of watchful waiting on the Rhine, nothing helped our morale any more than the many vacations. The granting of these was indeed "casting oil on the troubled waters." We had been in Europe for more than eight months and had not had a leave. It was a general rule that after four months in France one would be given two weeks vacation but this practice had been discontinued

during our gloomy fighting days because every available man was needed on the job. General Headquarters apparently had thought that it was far better to suspend the vacations and exert every effort to end the terrible struggle before winter than to take the matter semi-seriously and have to go into winter quarters which would give the enemy a splendid chance to prepare for another slaughter. Most of us appreciated those circumstances and there was very little serious complaint among the men because of their not having been allowed a vacation sooner.

There was one class of leaves to the Savoie country in France down near the Switzerland border in the edge of the Alps and in sight of Mt. Blanc. The cities of Aix-les-Bains and Chambery afforded a variety of attractions for the homesick Yankee. These were summer resorts visited each year by thousands of tourists who would spend young fortunes there.

In going on these, our transportation and hotel bills were free, and when I say "hotel," I don't mean barracks. Men going on these leaves got splendid hotel accommodations. The hotels were not crowded as the tourists had

not yet begun to swarm in and the number of soldiers going through there each was limited. Although our necessities on this trip were free, the thrifty French vendor, true to tradition, had conceived every imaginable scheme to separate the wealthy Yankee soldier from his francs. There was every brand of champagne, vin rouge, vin blanc, cognac and various and sundry bric-a-brac. Every shape, size, brand, color, kind and variety of souvenirs were displayed to tempt the soldier's purse.

One of the most popular classes of leaves was the fourteen day leave to any part of France except to the other leave areas which were operated on the plan detailed above. One could route his trip so as to see all the large cities and most of France. Many got a chance to peep into Italy or Switzerland.

There was a captain in our regiment, a rather practical sort of fellow (I can say "fellow" now because I am not in my O. D.'s), whose duties were such, so he told the guard at the Franco-Spanish boundary, that he spent a few minutes in Spain.

Many went to Dijon, Lyons and Marseilles during the cold winter days of February and

came back with stories of palms, flowers, and tropical fruits. Others went to Nice and Monte Carlo and saw the world of splendor and on their returning declared that one could not exaggerate on the beauty and attractiveness of the recreation and gambling resort of the world.

Most of those going on the fourteen day leave routed themselves through Paris. For a while those merely passing through that crowded city had to catch the next train out going to their destination. However, this rule was later relaxed and extended to a maximum of 24 hours.

The regular Paris leave gave one a minimum of seventy-two hours in the city. If one did not care much for seeing the other parts of France, but preferred to see the capital city and see it well, that leave was preferable. It was the leave to see the quality rather than the quantity.

I preferred the Paris leave to any of the others and had made my application accordingly. On Washington's Birthday I was up on the cold prairie and had the blues pure and simple. I had been sent up there on special

duty in a fellow's place who was off on the leave to southern France. Suddenly he came in to relieve me and informed me that my pass was waiting for me at Headquarters. My gloom transformed to joy. I got my junk together quicker than I ever had before and was soon on my way back to Lieser. The next day I met a friend from San Antonio, Texas, who was going also and on Monday, Feb. 24th, we started for France.

We reached Trier about 11 o'clock and stayed there until 1 p. m. We passed through Luxemburg but did not stop. We arrived at Metz about 4 p. m. and stayed about one hour.

Metz is a very modern city. All the buildings are electrically lighted and steam heated and the many churches, monuments and beautiful homes scattered along the Moselle River make a splendid metropolitan combination of beauty. The signs in Metz were in German but they have perhaps since been changed to French. Metz proper had not been shelled nor bombed, even during OUR drive in that vicinity. The chief objective for our long range artillery had been the forts and the railroads in the outskirts of the city. The French

had protested against shelling Metz. As they expected it to be theirs after the war they did not want it destroyed. When we beheld the beautiful city we could well appreciate their position.

We had a long tedious journey from Metz to Toul. That section of the road had been practically in No Man's Land for four years. The shells had sung their destructive song all along the right of way and as the roadbed was none too solid the trains travelled rather cautiously.

We met a bunch of Frenchmen on the train who were returning from their sector of Army of Occupation in Rhineland. They were bound for home and freedom. We spent the time trying to "parlez vous" with them. We would get our French and German all mixed up and invariably say "Ja" for "Oui." We had been in Germany for more than two months, living in the German homes and had had far better opportunity to learn that language than we had had to learn French, since the majority of our time in France had been spent in the trenches and mostly away from the French

"poilus," consequently we had become accustomed to "Deutsch."

Those Frenchmen were certainly a happy set. As they ate their bread and "monkey meat," drank their wine, and smoked their cigarettes their hearts were overflowing with joy at the thought of returning home for the first time, in some instances, for four years.

They would point to their old dingy uniforms and say that the latter would soon be salvaged and "civile habileament" donned instead.

We arrived in Toul about 11 p. m., having travelled about fifty miles in six hours. In Toul we could not find a bed for love, political pull, nor money. The Red Cross was conducting a hotel just opposite the depot but all the rooms were "fini." We went into the wet canteen and partook of an enormous quantity of sandwiches and hot chocolate. We then went searching around in the direction of town, in hopes of finding a hotel.

At the gates of the city we encountered an M. P. who refused to admit us on a Paris pass. I positively told him that I did not care a continental about seeing the city of Toul, as I had

already seen it last October by climbing over the wall, but that we would like to find some place to sleep. All of my arguments were fruitless which rather discouraged me because, usually, I have the woman's proverbial "last word." However, the M. P. softened his tone and talked sensible, saying that he was merely going by orders, etc., etc., the same old story. He expressed his sympathy for us, which, although duly appreciated, did not relieve our fatigue in the least so we decided to "About face" and "forward march" to the depot. We went back to the station and waited for a train to Nancy which we caught about 2:30 a. m.

We arrived at Nancy about 4 a. m. It was some time before we found a hotel but we finally located in the Y. M. C. A. Hotel and after a brief nap we enjoyed a good breakfast. The next day we spent in sleeping and seeing the city.

There are many interesting things to see in Nancy. There are many parks, statues, churches, etc., which have a historical importance. Many royal families have lived in the city as it was the capital of Alsace for a number of years. At present it is the capital of the

"Department" of "Meurthe-et-Moselle" and has a population of about 150,000.

On Wednesday morning, the 26th, we boarded the train for Paris. Just before leaving the hotel we met an old friend of mine from East Texas who accompanied us. As we were out of the Army of Occupation area we had to buy our tickets, which was a mere trifle, being 9 francs to Paris, which was one-fourth the commercial rate.

We had a second class compartment and we could easily lie down on the soft cushion and sleep whenever we cared to. This was a great treat to us as our former trip through that section of the country had been in the "40 Hommes—8 Chevaux" type of cars.

We passed through Bar le Duc, Epernay, Chalons-sur-Marne, and battle scarred Chateau Thierry where the tide of the war was turned by our noble Second Division. It will require extensive engineering to ever conceal from the passengers along that route the signs of destruction wrought in that section of the Western Front.

We arrived in Paris about 6 p. m., and after going through the ordeal of showing our

passes to numerous M. P.'s and R. T. O.'s, being checked in and sworn at, etc., we were so fortunate as to find the Y. M. C. A. Hotel not far from the station.

The Y. M. C. A. and Red Cross certainly do their share to make the soldiers in Paris feel at home. The "Y" man at the station had directed us to the Grand Pavilion Hotel which was now conducted by the Red Triangulars. All of the rooms were occupied but we were directed to a small hotel, The Brady, where we secured real nice rooms at a reasonable price.

We took our meals at the Pavilion Hotel and got splendid service and lots of good things to eat. A general bureau of information was there and all of the sight-seeing trips conducted by the "Y" left there twice daily. The hotel was one of the chief rendezvous for the leave soldiers.

Having engaged our rooms and eaten a good supper (or dinner) we set out to see Paris. We walked to Boulevard des Capucines and down it until we reached the Place de l'Opera where we beheld the most beautiful opera house in the world.

To the globe trotter, imbibed with wander-

lust, or the careworn soldier who has been isolated for a time from the comforts of civilian and metropolitan life, there is no place in the world with more charm than this famous panoramic corner. As the surging crowd moves to and fro one can observe humanity of every clime in the endless stream.

Paris, beautiful Paris, the city of the hour, the jewel of France, the queen of Europe. Every Frenchman is proud of his capital. In fact, Paris is far ahead of France. Any complaint of the country in the rural districts is met with the suggestion, "But you should see Paris." The builders of Paris have been on the job ever since they started. It's ALL there, and more too. As one fellow said, "You can't see the city for the buildings."

There are no immense skyscrapers in Paris. It does not occupy one-half the space in the air as New York City, but it is the opposite as to ground space. Street cars are not so numerous as they have been superseded by the subways. For twenty-five centimes one can ride all "under" the city. The sidewalks on the main boulevards are extremely wide. Under the awnings, which cover only about one-third

of the width, there are numerous notion counters, or if the building happens to be occupied by a cafe there are rows of marble topped wine tables and rattan chairs.

The Paris crowds are very patient. No matter how badly crowded they are in the street cars, on the streets, in the subway cars, or anywhere else, there is never any complaint.

It is remarkable at the number of Parisians who can speak English. This, no doubt, has been stimulated in the past few years by the constant association with the people of the two great English speaking countries. Indeed, Americans are no novelty in Paris.

We spent four nights and three days in the city and saw everything of historical interest that the "Y" sight-seeing trips covered. We saw the St. Gervais Church and the shell-torn hole which had been wrought by Big Bertha on Good Friday, 1918; the famous Notre Dame Cathedral; Lafayette Monument, which had been donated by the school children of the United States; the old bridges across the Seine which had been built for several centuries; the place from where the murder of St. Bartholomew was ordered; the famous Bastille; the

Eiffel Tower, and the Pantheon de la Guerre. The Pantheon de la Guerre is one of the greatest paintings in the world. The chief characters of all the Allied Nations as well as the ideals for which we fought are very vividly portrayed. In the American group President Wilson appeared so natural that we wanted to tap him on the shoulder and tell him to hurry up with the Peace Conference, because we were part of that new "Watch on the Rhine." On the concave surface of the dome was an elaborate illustrated map of the Western Front from the North Sea to Metz, showing the actual trenches, the chief cities destroyed or imperiled, etc., and the locations of the various armies. By looking at that great painting for one hour one can learn a large volume of the history of the World War and appreciate the true situation. This great picture will indeed be one of the chief objectives for world tourists.

The Hotel des Invalides, which Napoleon built, is a hospital for the sick and wounded soldiers of France. With all of its splendor and accommodations spectators are impelled to express profound respect for the great warrior.

The latter's tomb is in the background and it is very magnificent. There is also a vast collection of relics which pertain to the great chief's career. Among them is the carriage which hauled the body to its last resting place on St. Helena Island.

The Latin Quarter is one of the oldest sections in the city. It contains all the great world famous universities of which the Parisians are justly proud. Most of the college buildings contain statues and marble busts of France's great professional men. Among them is Pasteur who invented the present day treatment for hydrophobia and who was one of the greatest benefactors to medical science in the world. In the edge of this Latin Quarter are the Luxemburg gardens, the recreation park of France.

I spent an entire afternoon in the Louvre Museum, which is decidedly the greatest in the world. During Napoleon's conquests he brought back numerous collections from Italy. Four of the ancient countries, Rome, Greece, Egypt, and Assyria, furnished the majority of the works of sculpture and painting. Many of the highly treasured statues had been encased

in sand bags during the frequent bombardment and heavy shelling, among these being the world famous original Venus. After seeing the Gods and Goddesses one regrets that he is not more learned in their mythology.

In addition to seeing the many historical sights of Paris, one can spend many interesting hours observing the commercial phase of the great metropolis. There are some of the most beautiful jewelry stores in the world with the tempting show windows which makes one wish he had "beaucoup francs." There are also great shoe stores some of which are branch houses of American firms.

I was greatly surprised at the modesty of the Paris styles. There has been an impression in America that Paris is responsible for all of the styles of an indecent tendency. The fact that some of the costumes worn at some of our social functions are abbreviated to the extent that they are severely condemned by the pulpit and some of the public, is evidently due to the alterations made through the medium of commerce rather than the source. The highest class people in Paris have apparent good taste and there were not so many objec-

tionable features as are found in some of our own cities.

The average Parisian is not a helter-skelter money maker. He takes time to eat. He should worry because some extra money might be in store for him if he will rush back from "dejeuner." He sometimes consumes two hours, as well as a goodly portion of wine, at his lunch. At the close of working hours, the cafes and their adjoining terraces are crowded to their capacity as the happy Frenchmen laugh, talk, smoke, and sip their wine or beer.

It is fortunate for the last Texas Legislature that they did not hold their session in Paris. If they had they would probably have been mobbed when they made an attempt to curb the practice of "tipping," because there it is more of a rule than a mere custom or generosity. In the cafes and hotels all waiters and porters are supposed to be tipped 10 per cent of the bill.

We took a side trip to Versailles and went through the great Palace built by Louis XIV. We saw the beautiful gallery of glasses in which the greatest Peace Treaty of the World

was later signed. We also saw the gallery of battles which contained the paintings of all the famous battles in which France had been the victor. The battle of Yorktown was portrayed very vividly and you could easily recognize the hero of the cherry orchard. I looked in vain for the battle of Quebec and I inquired of the guide if it was not shown. He told me that he had never seen it and that as it was a defeat he presumed that the French Kings preferred not to include it.

After having had a splendid time in the charming European capital we left Sunday morning, March 2nd, and arrived back at our headquarters on Monday night. As we returned over practically the same route as we had come over, nothing of importance transpired on our return trip.

Other vacations were enjoyed by those having relatives in Italy, Belgium and England. All men were supposed to carry their full equipment with them when going on leaves but that rule was violated fully as much as the anti-fraternization order. All going on leave who had to buy their meals were allowed a reasonable reimbursement for rations. Men who

had been prone to criticize the Government and War Department in other instances were now convinced by these liberal vacations that the American soldier is more than a mere slave.

CHAPTER XIX.

OUR LAST DAYS IN RHINELAND.

As the several units and subdivisions of the Texas-Oklahomans occupied the many little villages, nothing unusual happened.

Not many weeks after the announcement of our sailing date being in June, rumors began to float that the shipping schedule had been moved up, and that we would leave in early May instead of June. Although this was encouraging we could not believe it for a long time. It sounded too good to be true. Nothing official came out for a long time to that effect and it seemed likely that it had originated from some clever superoptimist who thought that the best way to revive the "Wall Street of the Army."

In early April we could see that it was really a fact that we would bid good-bye to the Mosel before we saw the vineyards in their greenest splendor. By the middle of April it became official that our division would begin moving May 19th.

Good Friday was a great event in Germany.

The civilians took a holiday. We excused them from road work and allowed them to enjoy the fest day in their usual way. At Coblenz and Trier the natives were allowed the same freedom that they would have enjoyed had there been no Army of Occupation. This was some contrast with what had occurred on Good Friday only one year before when the St. Gervais Church in Paris was shelled by the Germans during the worship hours, which was the grossest violation of civilized warfare ever committed.

On April 24th General Pershing reviewed our division at Wengorohr and awarded Distinguished Service Crosses. He told the boys, that we would be on our way home "tout de suite" et cetera, and said several other things complimentary to the longhorns and Indians. Later we received the following letter:

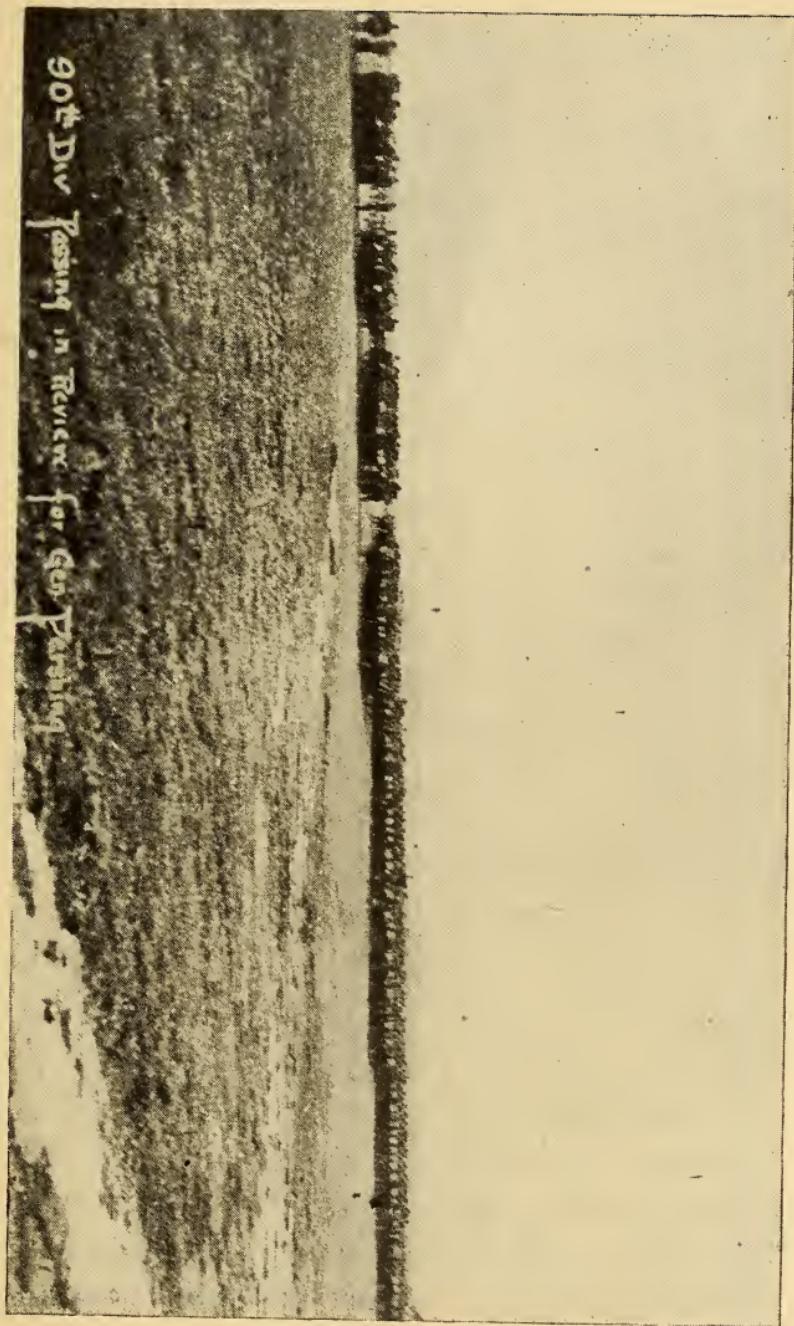
"American Expeditionary Forces.

Office of the Commander-in-Chief,

France, April 26, 1919.

*Major General Charles H. Martin,
Commanding 90th Division, American E. F.*

My Dear General Martin: It gives me much



Ninetieth Division Passing in Review for General Pershing.

pleasure to congratulate you and through you the officers and men of your division on the splendid appearance that it made at its inspection and review on April 24th at Wengorohr. The smart appearance of personnel and the good condition in which I found the horse transportation and artillery are sure signs of the high morale that permeates all ranks. This is only what one could expect of a division which has such a fine fighting record.

Arriving in France toward the end of June, 1918, it underwent until the end of August, the usual course of training behind the line. It was then placed in the Villers-en-Haye sector and there took part in the St. Mihiel offensive where it attacked the strong positions on the Hindenburg line immediately to the west of the Mosel River. In these operations it was entirely successful, mopping up the Bois-des-Rappes, occupying the town of Vilcy-sur-Trey, the Bois-de-Presle and the Foret-de-Venchere, and advancing to a depth of 6 1-2 kilometers. On the night of October 21st the division entered the Meuse-Argonne offensive, taking the town of Bantheville and the high ground north and northwest of that town. In the tremendous

attack of November 1st it continued its splendid record, piercing the Freya Stellung, crossing the Meuse and taking 14 villages in very rapid advance. The Carriere Bois, the Bois-de-Raux, Hill 246 (the capture of which was vital to the division on the left) and Hill 321 were the scenes of desperate fighting on the opening day of the attack. On November 2nd Villers-devant-Dun was taken and the following day the Bois-de-Montigny, Bois-de-Tuilly, Bois-de-Mont, Bois-de-Sassey, and the town of Montigny-devant-Sassey were taken, a very deep and rapid advance being made. On the 4th Halles was occupied. By November 10th the infantry had crossed the Meuse and the town of Mouzay was taken. The division was pressing the enemy hard at the time of the signing of the armistice.

As a part of the 3rd Army the division participated in the march into Germany and the subsequent occupation of enemy territory. I am pleased to mention the excellent conduct of the men under these difficult circumstances as well as for their services in battle. They are the credit of the American people. I wish to express to each man my own appreciation

of the splendid work that has been done and
the assurance of my continued interest in his
welfare.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) JOHN J. PERSHING."

About May 1st all organizations began to assemble at their original quarters and prepare for final inspections, orders, etc. The several detachments of our regiment moved as near Lieser as could be conveniently arranged. It was like an old family reunion to see the various "Buddies" who had not seen each other for three or four months meet each other.

The well advertised Division Circus was pulled off at Berncastel-Cues May 1st and 2nd. The parade justly belonged in the category of Barnum & Bailey and Ringling Bros. The Midway, which was called Loco Lane, furnished side shows of every variety. Chas. Chaplin in his Ford kept everybody laughing and scared too.

The many good jokes that were played on the spectators convinced them that the promoters and managers were by no means amateurs. Megaphones were in abundance and each show claimed to have the best attraction. It seemed real. One was reminded of child-

hood days when he saw his first elephant or side show. The real ring circus with the talent of every state in the union was indeed a success. The many clowns, trapeze actors, acrobats, etc., kept the spectators in an incessant roar of laughter and appealed to the childlike disposition which everyone in the A. E. F. had developed. To prove that it was a Texas-Oklahoma affair it came a heavy rain the first day, which produced five pounds of mud for every pair of hobnails that tread upon the grounds.

The first week in May all the little winding roads in our divisional area were lined with details of every unit of the division on their way to the Remount at Mayens, above Coblenz, to turn in the stock.

All orders necessary for an early departure were being issued and complied with. All surplus equipment was being turned in. Our O. D.'s which had served us so well throughout the winter in Rhineland were being exchanged or at least reduced to one pair.

Our Medical Detachment was in a peculiar situation with reference to our team of mules, "Can't" and "Won't." The Quartermaster did not have us charged with them and did not

want to receive them but they were government property. It will be remembered that we captured them near Faye-en-Haye in the St. Mihiel sector and they had been of very useful service ever since. On hiking into Germany these favorites of Balaam had hauled our blankets most of the time while our packs were camouflaged with some Sunday newspaper from home enwrapped in our shelter half. We did not want to sell the mules because we knew that we could not spend the money for chocolate, cigarettes, et cetera, so finally our major induced the Q. M. to take them and the little Dutch wagon that went with them.

May 1st was a big day in Lieser. The daughter of Baron von Schorlemer and a wealthy German officer of Coblenz were married in the beautiful church and a banquet at the castle followed. Our officers indulged in fraternization to some extent and a great time was had. We were glad to see our officers have a good time because the majority of them were real men who merely wore officers' uniforms and not the kind who took advantage of their rank at every opportunity.

Our last few days in Rhineland were spent

happily. The beautiful hills along the Mosel grew greener every day. We now counted the time that must elapse in days. When we left the good old U. S. nearly one year before, we counted the time in which we would return in years. When we saw our allied armies gaining ground every day we measured our sojourn in months (if we were fortunate enough to survive). It was glorious to realize that we would leave "this month."

All of us were anxious to get home again. We had visions of the advantages of Texas, Oklahoma and the various other states of the good old U. S. A.

The Lieserbach and the Mosel contained abundance of fish and for a nominal fee we caught some good bass and carp. Swimming, also, was as good pastime as fishing and the grown up men of the draft age reminded one of the barefoot days when we played hookey from school to swim in the "Old Swimmin' Hole." The longer we stayed on the Mosel the more beautiful the scenery became in spite of our anxiety to get home. The picturesque, green and shady hills and valleys afforded splendid backgrounds for kodaking parties.

The days were growing long. Dark came at about 9 p. m. and very few of us knew what hour marked the break of day, because first call did not blow until about 6:30 and the earth was then well started on its daily journey. We thought of the bygone days of the training period and we chuckled with glee as we would roll on our feather beds.

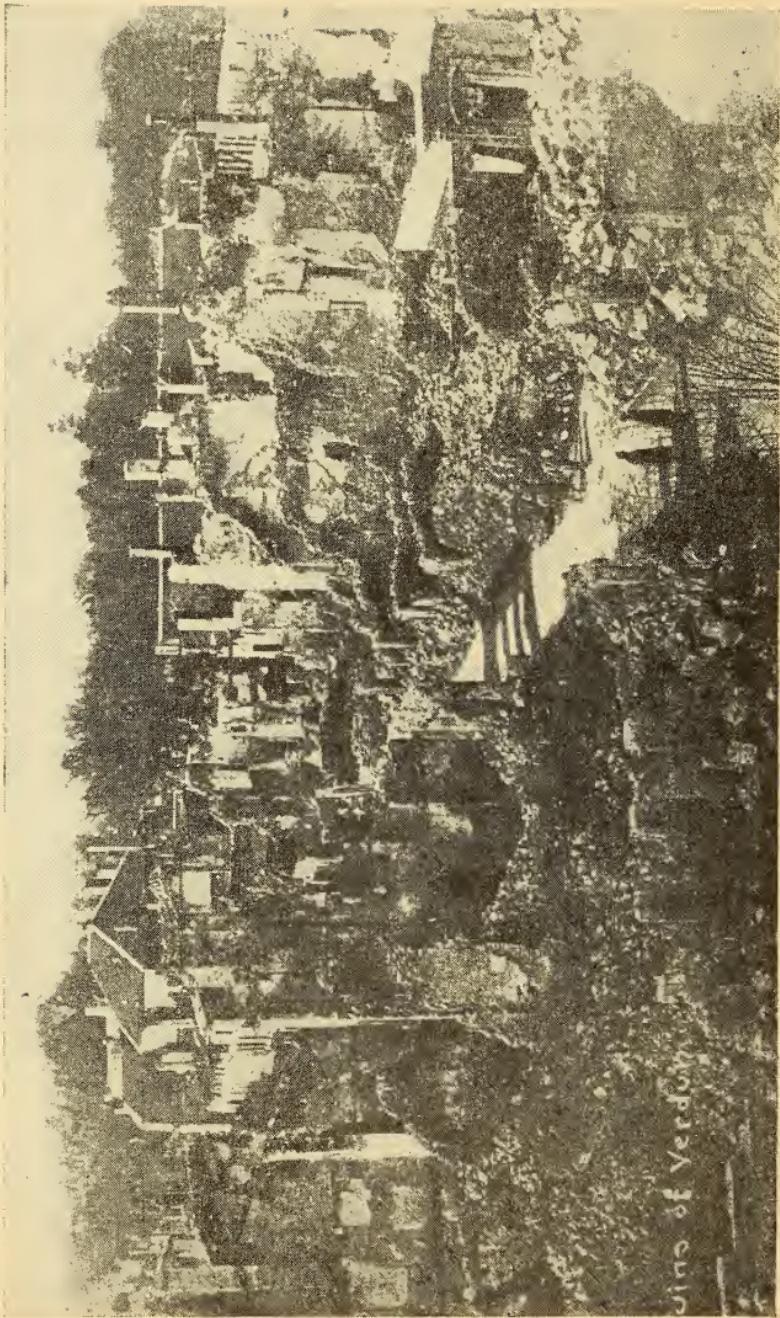
Just before our departure from Rhineland we got the order that we would go to St. Nazaire instead of Brest. Many were infuriated at the news as they felt that it was such an inferior port that we would likely remain there for some time before we could walk the gang plank and then perhaps catch a small boat that would require three or four more days in crossing the Atlantic than the larger ones.

On Saturday, May 17th, the first trainload of our division left Wengorohr. On Wednesday, May 21st, exactly five months from the day our division located at Berncastel, our regiment left Lieser. The frauleins lined the streets as we left. All the rules against fraternization were violated and very few soldiers left there undecorated with flowers from hobnails to helmet, or overseas cap, and the ma-

jority carried an ample supply of wine. The weather was delightful and the hills glistening with verdure seemed to beckon us to remain.

The majority of us went on trucks to Wengorohr. Some went on trains. As we rolled out through the hills and valleys we realized that most of us were seeing the Mosel country for our last time and that we were—"Home-ward Bound."

Ruins of Verdun.



CHAPTER XX.

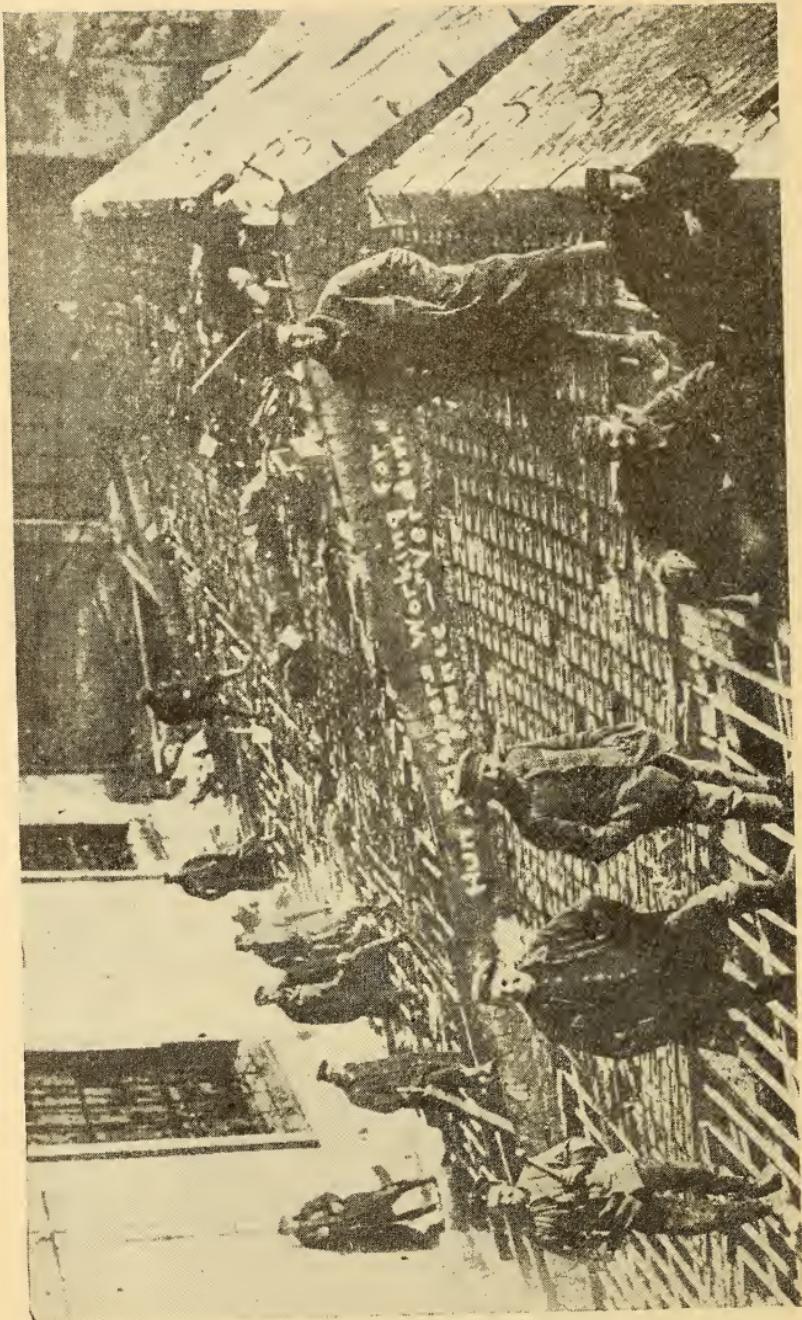
HOMeward Bound.

It was a happy sight at Wengorohr when our regiment assembled to entrain for our journey out of Deutschland and across France. Our unit with a part of Headquarters troop of the division made the last two train loads. Companies "A," "B," "C," "D," and the Band and two-thirds of the Medical Detachment composed the first train and the remainder composed the last. The Y. M. C. A. was on the job and served abundance of chocolate and sandwiches. No one went to bed hungry that night.

Our train was composed of box cars again but they were man-sized from the U. S. A. We had a great deal more room than we had had in the small French cars. We had bed sacks filled with excelsior which made a very good bed.

I was on the first train. We went to bed at dark and the train pulled out at 12:06 a. m. Thursday morning. We came through Briey and the old battlefields to Verdun. All the way through the battle torn area the road was so rough that we could hardly stay on the train.

Hun Prisoners Working for France.



All around Verdun the hills and valleys were an agglomeration of ruins. The many cemeteries bore evidence of the slaughter of 1916. I wished that those Germans who had complained of the burdens of the peace treaty and declared "Alles kaput an der Mosel" could see devastated France again as a reminder that the peace terms were really very mild.

In the Verdun country we saw many Hun prisoners at work rebuilding what they and their comrades had destroyed. Many of them came to the train and asked for cigarettes. Their requests were usually granted.

About dark on Thursday the 22nd, we stopped at Gondrecourt for another meal, then we spent another night of rough riding. The cars seemed to jump straight up and down. Neither Billy Sunday nor Henry Ford could possibly shake more hell out of anyone than those box cars which we left Germany in.

The next day we passed through Bourges where we ate dinner. We were getting into a very pretty country. All of the flowers and fields of grain had reached their zenith in charm and there were small streams and trees to complete the attractiveness.

We passed through Tours and Gievres. At the latter place there was a large supply and salvage depot of the Service of Supply. As we gazed upon the thousands of empty "corn willy" cans we came to the conclusion that our regiment alone evidently had not consumed all the bully beef in the A. E. F.

About noon on Saturday, the 24th, we arrived at Nantes, where we detrained. We were in a very unpleasant mood as we unloaded. We felt that there were boats in St. Nazaire waiting for us and we wanted to get there at the earliest possible moment. After eating our lunch we got our packs on and started out in search for a place to stay. After walking about one mile in the heat we discovered that we were on the wrong road so we started back. After some two hours of "mean" hiking and crossing the numerous bridges of the Loire River we found very comfortable billets in Pont-a-Rousseau, a suburb of Nantes.

We wondered how long we would have to stay in Nantes and Pont-a-Rousseau before proceeding to the port. We passed off the time quite pleasantly, however. Many got passes to the city which is approximately the size of San Antonio,

Texas. Our infirmary was located in a green house, and flower gardens and shade trees afforded a very attractive resting place. There was a swimming pool nearby and many of us enjoyed a good "plunge." The remainder of our regiment was only about two hours behind us. They were not billeted with us but they were not far away.

Although we had a good location we were delighted as we rolled on our packs on Tuesday, the 27th, and completed our journey to the port of embarkation. We arrived at St. Nazaire about 1 p. m. All of our regiment except "A" and Train Companies which had preceded us the day before.

Under the hot broiling sun we put on our packs for another hike. We marched through town and down the Boulevard along by the side of the great blue waves. As we observed the latter and a few large ships, numerous cheers rang through the air. In the distance one out-going boat was gradually becoming invisible. A marine told us that it was loaded with a unit of our division. We also saw a large boat, the Mongolia, and our hearts beat with joy as we thought of the probability of its being "Ours." As we continued our

march to the camp we met the Second Battalion of the 359th Infantry making their way to the gang plank.

After a very tiresome march we arrived at Camp No. 2 about 3:30 p. m. and within one hour the entire company had passed a very successful physical examination. At 5:30 p. m. we were marched into the large mess hall and treated to a good supper of pork chops, beans, bread, doughnuts and coffee.

After our hearty meal we enjoyed a short band concert, the first number being "Homeward Bound." As soon as that was over we started down the dusty road to Camp No. 1, which we passed through and located in Isolation Camp. Here a series of disappointments began.

We expected to sail within at least three days and we thought that in the event we did not that we would enjoy some of the good eats which we had been reading about in the paper. The good meal at Camp No. 2 had caused us to believe the reports of how the soldiers on their way home had feasted during their stay in St. Nazaire.

Appreciating as I did, the tremendous task of caring for the personnel of the entire A. E. F.,

I was always slow to criticize the War Department, but here I must digress from that policy and say that there was something wrong at St. Nazaire. It was more like a prison camp than anything we encountered during our entire career. The chow which was served us at Isolation Camp was no better than we had had in the trenches while in actual battle. Corned beef was the chief edible, three times a day. We realized, however, that feeding so many men was a problem, but the existence of all the facilities except the food made the latter less excusable. The mess hall covered about one acre of ground and there were five chow lines. The building was floorless. There were 112 tables with room for a maximum of ten men to each table. There were no stools nor chairs and as soon as we finished eating we would make our way outside to the twelve big vats of mess kit water. Our band supplemented the corned beef and tea with some good music. We usually spoke of going to chow as going to "music," which was usually said in an undertone, however. We learned that several who had preceded us had been given heavy penalties for making complaints so that made the situation worse. One fellow said that it was the

first time he was about to starve and could not say a word about it. To aggravate the case we observed that the permanent men were getting plenty to eat. We could not understand it but we had to endure it.

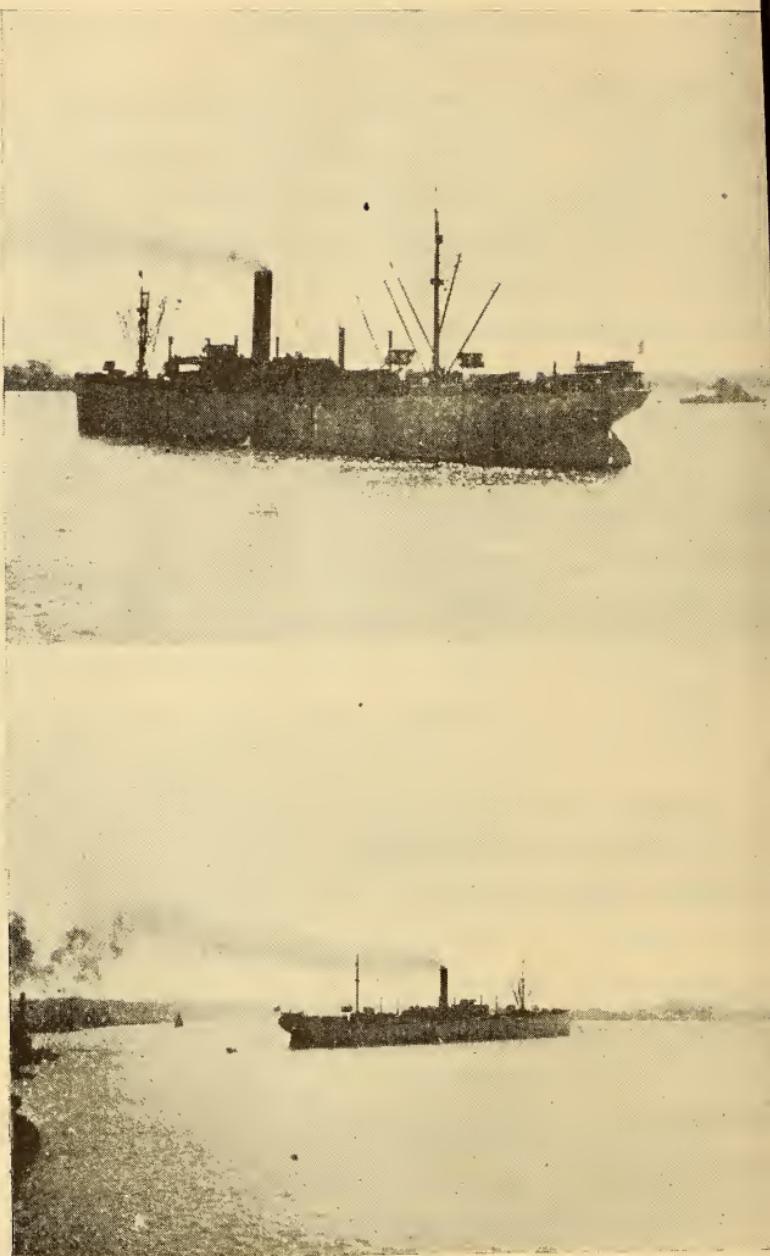
In spite of our scant chow, our few days in the camp passed off very well. The Y. M. C. A. had a splendid library. Each of the welfare organizations had a splendid entertainment program at Camp No. 1, only one kilometer away. Commissaries were in abundance and there was always a very long line at each one. The "Y" also had some delicious iced cocoa and lemonade. May Day was spent rather quietly, some of us attending services at Camp No. 1 and enjoying a real nice program.

The pastime that served best to break the monotony, was baseball. One of the first games was between our regiment and the "black" engineers. It was quite interesting to see the shines rap the leather "wid de wood." To make the game more amusing our boys made a few intended overthrows and the blacks got so far ahead that it required some three innings for us to catch up. There were many other games between various companies of the regiment which made some of

the boys rather "stove up" for the hike to the gang plank. The most interesting games were the two between the 315th Engineers and the Wild Cat Division, both of which we won, the latter one being a score of 2 to 0.

On Monday morning, June 2nd, we hurriedly chased back over to Camp No. 2 for final inspection which we passed O. K. In the p. m. we ate early supper and immediately crawled into our packs and made our last hike in France. We marched through town to the docks. Just before embarking we filed through the Y. M. C. A., where each of us was served chocolate, cookies, and cigarettes. About 9 p. m. we boarded the U. S. S. Alaskan. We slept peacefully in our new quarters and awoke the next morning to find ourselves still in the harbor. About 11 a. m. we steamed away leaving the many French civilians in the streets waving us a fond good-bye and bon voyage. We were happy. As some have said, the best way to see France was from the stern of a ship.

True to our expectations we drew a small boat. It only held our regiment and a few casuals. We felt a bit peeved as the sailors told us that it would require possibly 14 days to cross the pond, while



Homeward Bound.

many of the others had acquired 8 and 9 day boats. However, we hoped for the best. We had much better accommodations than we had had on the English boat. We had good spring bunks to sleep on and lots of good things to eat, the latter including fresh meats, "dog" sausage, canned fruits, grape fruit, eggs, cocoa, and good bread. The canteen, also, furnished us plenty of tobaccos, candies, fruits, etc. The ship was all steel frame and many got a good fall before the hobnails were removed from our shoes.

Our time on the ocean passed off real quickly. The Y. M. C. A. furnished us some splendid magazines. We enjoyed a good picture show each night when the weather would permit. We also had good band concerts and boxing bouts.

On June 5th, the anniversary of our departure from Camp Travis, we awoke to find a real calm sea. As we were steadily steaming away from the sun a casual reflection impelled us to feel thankful for our good fortune. What difference did it make if we were on a slow vessel? One year before we would have been delighted had we been assured that by June 5, 1919, we would be on our way back to the States even on a skiff.

We were going due westward, what better could we ask for?

The sea did not remain calm all the way. For about four days the waves were wild. The boat rocked like a cradle and seemed to be scarcely moving at all. However, we felt no fear for we knew that the submarine menace was a thing of the past and we could easily endure a mere rough sea.

On our way we met several boats going toward the land which we had fought on. None of us would have traded places with the passengers on those boats. The thing that tantalized us some was the occasional passing of a more rapid boat going in the same direction as we were.

Friday the 13th, one year from our sailing date from Brooklyn Harbor, found us not yet in sight of land. Rumors became prevalent that we would see land Saturday night or Sunday. Regardless of when we landed it was settled that we were entitled to the second service chevron as we had sailed one year before and the latest ruling from G. H. Q. allowed us the time from departure to the arrival in a U. S. port in determining the time of our overseas service.

On Saturday the 14th the fog became so dense

that our foghorn blew continually to prevent a collision. We wondered if Providence intended to play a pleasant trick on us by allowing us to drift into port before we could realize it. The next morning the fog was no better but we were a happy crowd as we passed buoys and lighthouses. The fog soon faded away and by 2 p. m. we could see land. Oh Boy!

We soon began to meet numerous yachts loaded with various reception committees, one of the most important being that of the mayor of New York City. That party was accompanied with a good band and we went wild with joy as they played the many appropriate selections. "Home Sweet Home" was the most impressive. The Statue of Liberty was in front of us, greeting us welcome home in the same position that she had told us good-bye one year and two days before. No one could have made us believe that the folks of the U. S. A. were more happy to see us back than we ourselves were to return.

As we were pulling into the harbor we ate our supper. About 6 p. m. we anchored at one of the Brooklyn docks not far from where we had made the gang plank last year. We soon debarked and the Salvation Army was on the job taking

our telegrams to our loved ones at home. The Red Cross served us a most delicious lunch of mince pie, milk, chocolate bar and cake. On our way to the ferry boat the Y. M. C. A. showered us with cigarettes, chocolate, and chewing gum.

As we steamed up the East River the many boats plying thereon greeted us with cries of welcome and the display of appropriate banners. Wasn't it great? There was the Woolworth Building just as we had left it. We realized again that this was the grandest country in the world. No wonder that we fought so hard to preserve our ideals.

We debarked from the ferry at Pennsylvania Station and took the Long Island Railroad for Camp Mills. Just as we were boarding the train the "Roses of No Man's Land" again accosted us with ice cold milk and cake. As we rolled out for the camp across the beautiful suburban country so swiftly we reflected that we were again in the "land of the free and the home of the brave." We traveled farther in two hours than we did the first two weeks we hiked into Germany.

We arrived in camp and were assigned to our barracks by 10 p. m. We had already eaten two meals, nevertheless we found another one wait-

ing for us. The camp had improved wonderfully since we had left it. Tents had been replaced by good well painted barracks and all conveniences were accessible. Camp exchanges and the many huts of the various welfare organizations were well distributed throughout the camp.

We awoke the next morning and enjoyed a good breakfast. The day was spent lounging around, taking baths and sending telegrams. All of us wondered how soon we would leave. We felt confident that we would have ample time to see Broadway and Fifth Avenue before our departure and we waited patiently for the Camp Officer to sign our passes.

The majority of our regiment went to the City Tuesday afternoon, the passes being good until 9 a. m. Wednesday. We went back to camp with various stories of the bright lights of Broadway, the many attractions at Coney Island and how the people on the streets "up town" looked like insects when viewed from the Observation Gallery of the Woolworth Building.

We stayed at Camp Mills longer than we had really expected to. However, we passed the time off quite pleasantly. Besides the trips to the city, there were good shows at the "Y" and the J. W.

B. huts, as well as at the Liberty Theatre in the camp. There were also good shows at Hempstead and Jamaica, only a short ride from the camp. The War Camp Community Service ladies gave splendid dances at Hempstead and the camp Recreation Hall.

On the 20th and 21st, "A," "B" and Train Companies broke up and left us. On Sunday the 22nd the remainder of our regiment was lined up and assorted according to destinations. The Oklahoma and Texas men went to Camp Pike, Ark., and Camp Bowie, Texas, respectively, except a few who accompanied Regimental Headquarters which went to Camp Dodge, Iowa. As we sat around in the hot sun we bade good-bye to our distant comrades with whom we had gone through the awful war, but it was a cheerful good-bye. No one ever saw a happier crowd.

On Monday afternoon the first trainload pulled out for Camp Bowie. We were in real comfortable Pullman cars once again. We were soon followed by the second section. We came over the Pennsylvania System to St. Louis, passing through Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburg, Columbus and Indianapolis. Out of St. Louis we took the Frisco, passing through Springfield

and Monett, Mo., Tulsa, Okla., and Denison, and Sherman, Texas, arriving in Fort Worth about dark, Thursday. The Red Cross treated us all along the route with ice cream, cookies, coca-cola, sandwiches, and cigarettes and our entire crowd showed that we appreciated the hospitality beyond expression.

The night we arrived in Fort Worth we slept in cars on the siding near the camp. The next morning we marched into Camp Bowie and located in some of the hottest tents we had ever lived in. It was June 27th and we were wearing our O. D. clothes. It seemed that we were nearer the infernal regions than we had been since we had left Meuse-Argonne. Our overseas caps, possibly, kept our hair from sunburning, otherwise they were absolutely worthless. Even the smallest clouds refused to appear between us and the sun and the latter beamed down with an intensity that is impossible of physical comparison between here and the Sahara Desert.

In spite of the heat, the red tape mills necessary for the discharge of the soldier were on the job. That was one place in the army that we actually looked for formations, instead of trying to avoid them with some trivial excuse.

The 48 hour rule was complied with so far as it concerned our bunch and on Saturday afternoon, June 28th, the anniversary of our landing in Liverpool, we received our discharges. I received mine about the time the Peace Treaty was signed.

That night the telephone booths and depots of Fort Worth were crowded to their capacity as the heroes of Fay-en-Haye and Madeleine Farm tried to get in touch with "Home Sweet Home."

FREE AGAIN! It was simply great.

CHAPTER XXI.

CONCLUSION.

Now we are back home and intend to begin life over, with a capital "L." There is nothing more for me to include in this volume except that I shall refer briefly to some of the leading topics of the day, i. e., Who won the war? The League of Nations, the benefits to be derived from the war, nationally and individually, etc.

It is folly for any nation to grossly magnify her work in the great world war. As has been often said: "There is glory enough for us all." National pride is very commendable but it should not be carried to the extreme and do an injustice to sister nations. It is not possible to say which particular nation won the war, but it is undisputable that America hastened its conclusion and helped to strike the fatal blow. Also, the very presence of American troops in France and Italy helped the Allies as much relatively, as it did directly. We can never know what would be the status of the war today had the United States remained neutral, but we have visions of the great city

of Paris being completely in the German hands and perhaps, also, London, and the entire British Isles. Mexico would likely be filled with German military leaders and that situation, which is growing more delicate every day, would be considerably worse than it is.

On the other hand, our achievements could not have been as many nor the results as great had it not been for the bravery, courage, and tenacity of our allies. In the beginning, Belgium made ultimate victory possible by proving to the world that she was a country and not a road. Next, the French and the British, assisted by the latter's Indian, Canadian and Australian troops, made a very commendable defense of Paris and thereby upset the Kaiser's plans. Also, the Italians stayed on the job the entire period and brought about the crumbling of Austria. Had it not been for the British fleet our Uncle Sam could not have transported his nephews across with any degree of progress. Thus being convinced that each nation did its part why not say that we all won the war and let it go at that?

Not only is there a dispute between nations as to who won the war but there exists the

same rivalry for glory among the various branches of the army. This even applies to some extent to the various war work done at home and to individuals. Just a word should be said with a view to making an equitable distribution to these various agencies.

The contentions between different branches of the army sometimes reach an unpleasant stage. When it is all analyzed it develops that none could exist without the other and that they are all very essential parts of the military machine. Personally, the infantry has my highest praise. It's the doughboy who lives under the most hazardous conditions and faces the stream of machine-gun bullets and the steel bayonets, yet he could not accomplish so much without the barrage and the storming of the enemy's strongholds by the artillery. The roads and bridges which are essential to the movement of all the units are built by the engineers who specialize in that work and understand how it should be done. All military operations are based on orders so we must have the signal corps so that headquarters can communicate with the various organizations. The medical corps is highly important in keeping

the health of the men in condition to fight and in caring for the wounded, restoring them, etc. Likewise we must have the Q. M. to make the abundance of corn willy possible, etc.

Those of us in the zone of advance often felt envious toward the Service of Supply merely because they were living better than we were and not enduring the hardships, yet their services were really invaluable. We had to have material, food, and fresh troops. These could not be had with any degree of certainty unless we had a systematic method of transportation that could be relied upon. It was not possible for those who worked in Tours or Bordeaux to spend their nights in the front line trenches, so why not let them do their bit as they were?

There has been a great deal of discussion of the welfare organizations and their work and having seen and appreciated a great deal of it, I feel qualified and impelled to express my views.

The Salvation Army is the greatest army in the world in proportion to its size, although it is not nearly so strong as some of the other organizations except in the spirit of doing good. In that it is unexcelled. The "dough

girl" is more popular in the A. E. F. than the dough "boy" and every soldier of the A. E. F. has the greatest respect and patriotic love for that "Salvation Lassie of Mine."

The Red Cross is one of the greatest organizations in the world and it did a wonderful work in the world war. It did not confine its work to medical assistance, but it assisted the soldiers in many ways in hotel accommodations, entertainment programs, athletics, serving refreshments, etc. Many useful articles of clothing were distributed through the Red Cross. The Red Cross Nurse is appropriately called the "Rose of No Man's Land." It is she who cared for so many in their dying hours and wrote so many sad letters home to the loved ones. Every soldier respects her as he justly should.

The Y. M. C. A. did not meet with the approval that the two former organizations did. Some of the criticism was unjust but a lot was warranted. Taken as a whole, I considered the work of the "Y" far from a failure, although its mistakes were many. Many of the boys could not understand why the "Y" charged for tobaccos, chocolate, etc., while the

Red Cross donated them. Of course it was unfair to define that as profiteering or graft because they had taken over the canteens and could not give everything away as some seemed to think, but these business rules could have been relaxed to a great advantage on numerous occasions. There were a few instances in which boys from the front, tired and hungry from several successive days of battle, were refused refreshments because they had no money. Was not that outrageous when the boys were giving their all for the preservation of America and American ideals? The people at home who had made the contributions certainly did not anticipate that such would happen, on the contrary the advertisements showed a secretary patting the doughboy on the back and going over the top with him. The condescending attitude of so many secretaries and their pretended desire to "accommodate" the soldier when he had his francs ready to pay for everything he asked for was very detestable. Although the organization did lots of good work and should not be dissolved as the radicals seem to advocate, there certainly

should be some improvement in the management and elimination of the evils.

We did not have much experience with the other welfare organizations. The American Library Association, Jewish Welfare Board, and the Knights of Columbus did not have representatives with our regiment but the former furnished us lots of good books to read through our chaplain, and we always found the two latter with good recreation rooms, etc., in the leave areas, and we enjoyed their hospitality immensely.

While dealing with the various military achievements we should bear in mind that we owe a lot to nautical ingenuity as well. It was remarkable how we faced the submarines and crossed the Atlantic in spite of Von Tirpitz's prediction.

We should not lose sight of the fact that the folks at home did their share in winning the war. Although there were profiteers and slackers, our country as a whole was very patriotic, for which we all rejoice. All Liberty Loan drives went over the top, and the War Savings Stamp campaigns and the drives of the various welfare organizations were no less

successful. Farmers, merchants, capitalists, laborers and professional men worked side by side in helping to carry the Stars and Stripes to victory. Never before were the principles of Democracy practiced more. If the patriotism of America should be made the test for admission to the world above, the keeper of the gates would have to demand more space and millions of ushers. Regardless of creed, politics, or religion, the citizenship of our lowest country proved to the world that we were "American" to the core.

It is useless to discuss the League of Nations question, as our Congress is consuming unnecessary time in that line. Suffice it to say that although the covenant may entangle us with the European countries, the majority of the doughboys prefer being entangled in that manner rather than in the barb-wire on the Hindenburg line. Our commercial relations are now so extensive that we could scarcely keep out of any war of any consequence, so we may as well be a party to covenant which will give us some authority to arbitrate matters and not be utterly handicapped in that capacity.

as was our case in 1914.. Boiled down, it's all to gain and nothing to lose.

The benefits to be derived from the war are many. In the first place, it taught us how to exercise the God-given right of self-defense. It taught our nation to do big things. The task which our War Department accomplished so well was a tremendous one. We can safely predict that the great problems like the H. C. of L. and the Mexican situation can be solved far better than they could have if we had had no experience in problems like the raising of the National Army, etc.

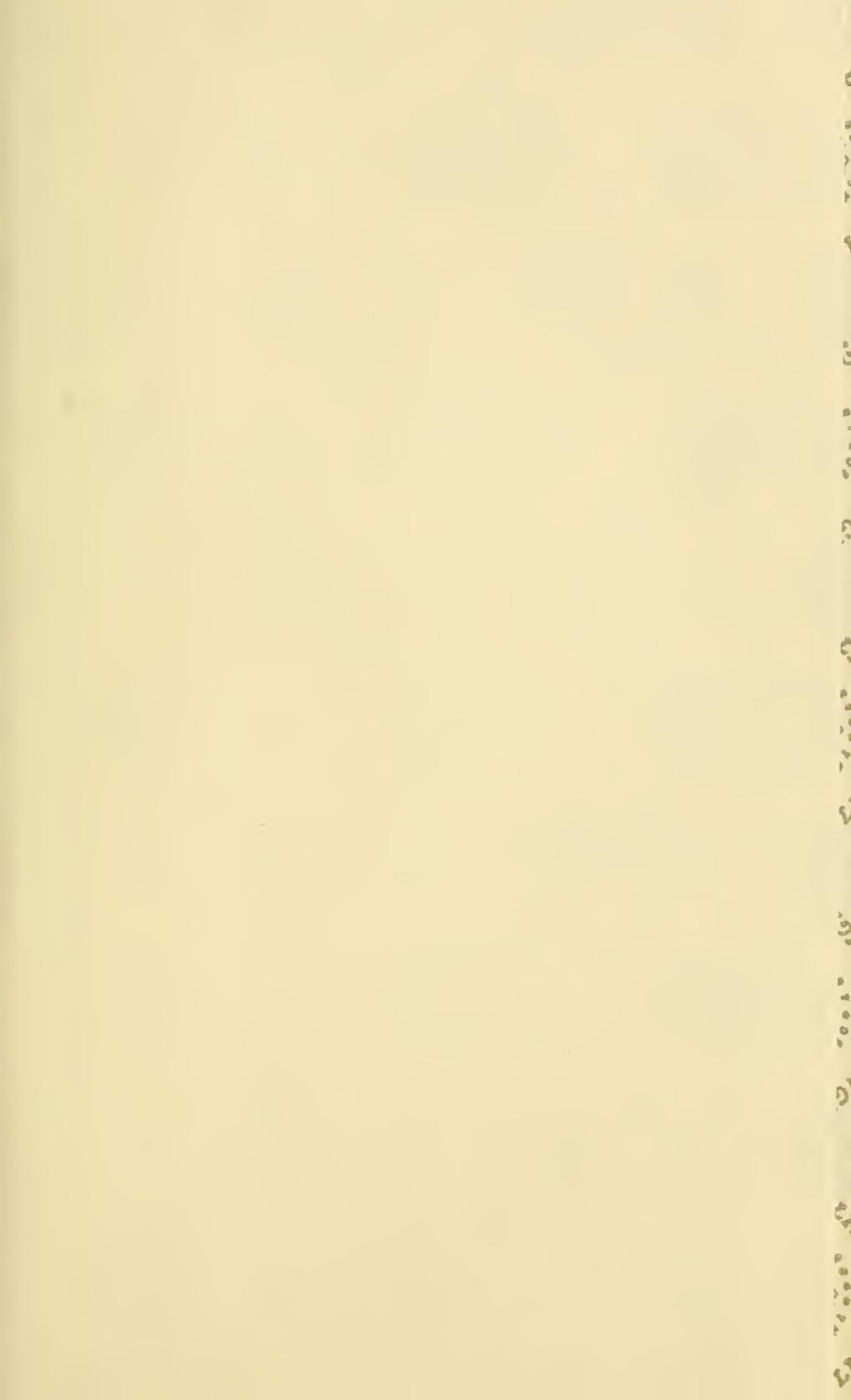
The individual reaped various benefits from the war. When we first entered the war we were told that it would be a great economic lesson to us. We really did learn how to live on a great deal less than we had theretofore, yet this practice has been discontinued since the war ended. This is due largely to the speculative instinct engendered in us by the recent oil developments. Especially is this so in Oklahoma, Texas and Louisiana. We do not take time to economize in the days of the "Get Rich Quicks." If we should give any reason for it, it would probably be that it is more

trouble than it is worth. If we have any spare time after studying the oil-stock market it is far more human to complain of the high cost of living than to try to remedy it.

One benefit that those of us who went to Europe realized is that the association with the people of England, France, Belgium, Italy, Russia, or Germany, and the learning of their ways and customs, makes us more liberal-minded; but the greatest of all is the fact that we learned to appreciate our own country all the more and realize that the United States of America is the greatest country in the world.

THE END.

H 45 89 ■





HECKMAN
BINDERY INC.



JUN 89

N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962



